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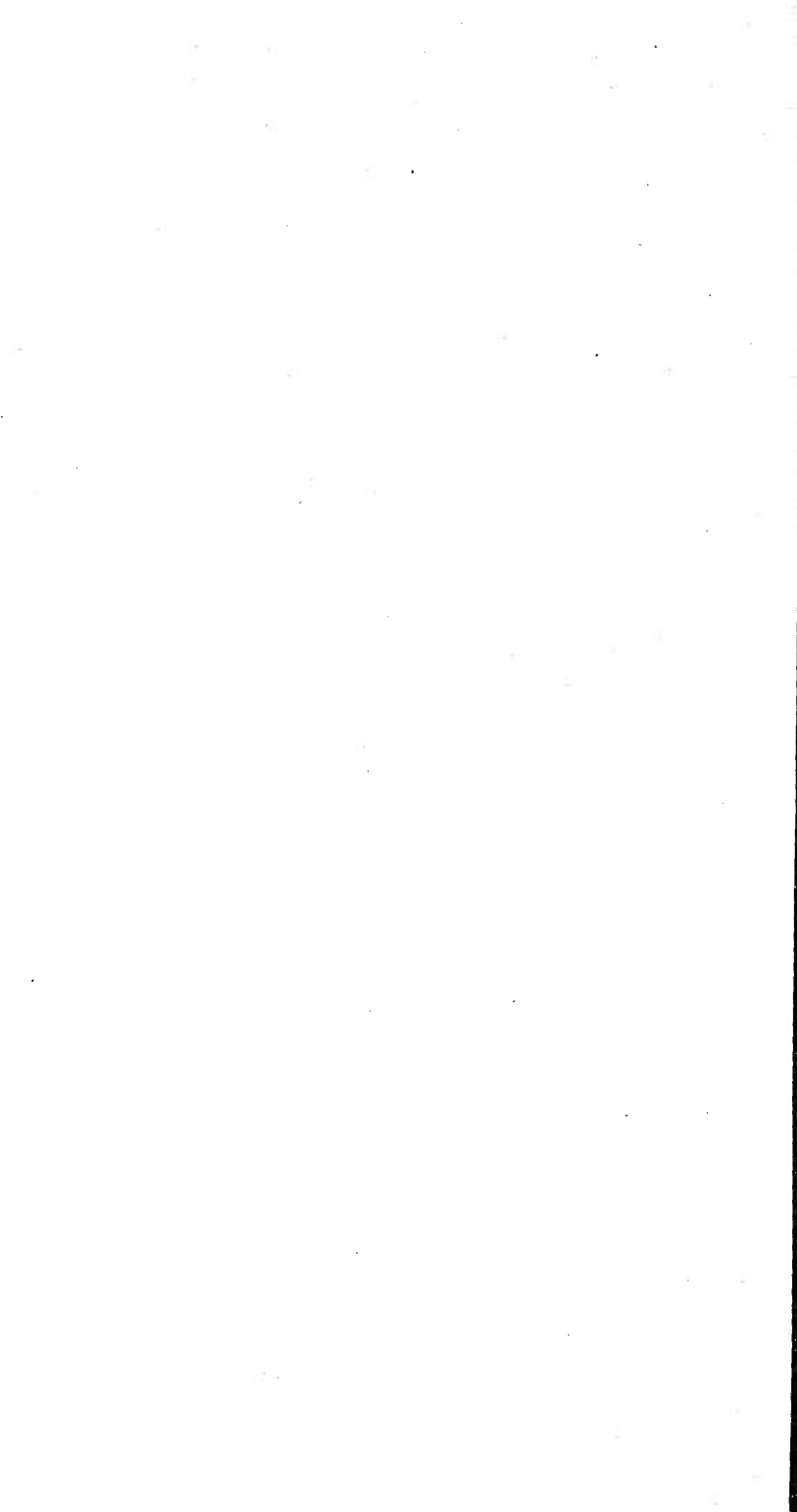
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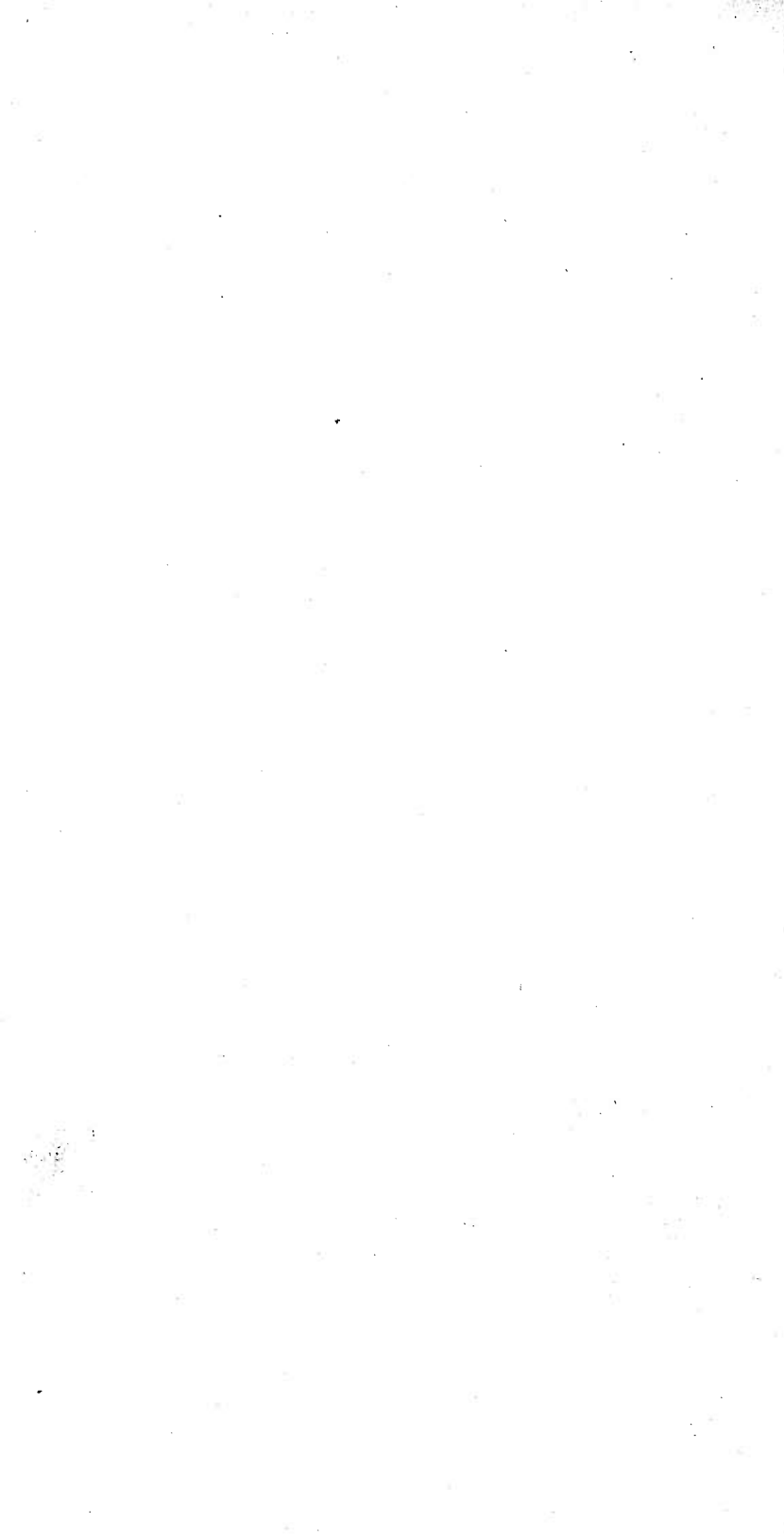
THE
LAST SERMONS

PREACHED AT

SAINT PAUL'S, KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

AND

SAINT BARNABAS', PIMLICO.



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"THE

LAST SERMONS

PREACHED AT

SAINT PAUL'S, KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

AND

SAINT BARNABAS', PIMLICO,

BY

WILLIAM J. E. BENNETT, M.A

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PREFACE OF DEDICATION.

It is my wish to present and dedicate this volume of Sermons to those of my former Parishioners of S. Paul's and S. Barnabas' who took part with me in the faithful struggle of the Autumn of 1850—a struggle in which we were joined together, rich and poor, as one man, to defend the liberties of the Church and the common faith.

It is but a poor acknowledgment of the consistency, the prudence, and the courage, with which you defended the Church of S. Barnabas against the outrages of a misled and ignorant mob.

May God forgive them whatever sin they committed, or intended to commit, in the desecration of our Church in that most unjust aggression; for it was an aggression against the liberty of the people, and contrary to the law of the land. It was an invasion of the great principle of religious tole-

ration, which of later years we have been taught had been secured to us, both in respect of justice, and in respect of the higher moral feelings of a nation which prides itself on the right of private judgment in the things of God.

But, seeing it was done ignorantly, and in unbelief, we should rather look to it as the offspring of the Evil Spirit, permitted of God to cleanse and purify us of some stain of sin, and so to work ultimate good to us, albeit at present grievous.

This volume has been put together so as to give you a record of the preaching of the last year of my incumbency; and if you will add the Sermons before published on the "Church, the Crown, and the State," you will find a tolerably close view of the miserable questions which have agitated and divided us during that unhappy period.

I have confined the volume to the one year's preaching, for two reasons:—

1. That it may be a testimony of the doctrines preached by me at the two churches under my charge.

2. That it may remind you of the many interesting and anxious hours we passed together in the House of God, during a time of most peculiar

and momentous importance in the annals of the Church of England.

It was a year when heresy was established by authority, and the discipline of the Church received its death-wound, in the intrusion of a heretic priest, judged so to be by the Church, into the Diocese of an orthodox Bishop—that intrusion forced by the Primate of all England, himself concurring, at the command of the secular power.

It was a year in which a sister Church, poor and crippled in temporal things, but relying solely on the spiritual power of the keys, came forth prominently among us to save the perishing souls of Westminster, Birmingham, and other like places, by giving them Chief Shepherds to rule and guide them in spiritual things; while we ourselves, filled to overflowing with the temporal grandeur of a State Establishment, and the riches of lands, tithes, and endowments, neglected their call, and in our cruelty left them, in this great and essential feature of the Church, to perish.

It was a year in which the Prime Minister of this great country, himself heretofore the leading champion of religious toleration, thought fit to dictate to the Bishops of the land what should be their

course in the government of the Church; and thereby, in exciting the passions of the multitude, provoked a scene of strife and controversy, the end of which he cannot himself foresee.

It was a year in which, notwithstanding all these untoward appearances, I verily believe the first stone has been laid for a reconstruction of the polity of the Church Catholic in these kingdoms; and so, in the longing gaze of our faith, we may breathe a somewhat deeper breath of hope, that God may be pleased soon to reunite the scattered members of His One Church, and to hasten His Kingdom.

Such was the year in which we were permitted, by God's Providence, to be joined together, to do battle against His enemies for a great principle. It is no matter that we failed in the immediate issue. That failure brings the ultimate victory. *It is our victory that we failed*, for yielding up our cause to Him Who ruleth all things, our victory was, that we maintained the faith; we yielded to the arm of secular force, represented by Episcopal authority. It was our duty to obey the Bishop—in obeying, we conquered.

All this, dear friends, I have said, because the selected Sermons bear a tendency to the illustration

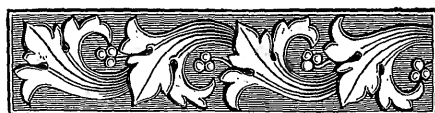
of these truths. They were delivered in the exciting storms of this eventful year. They are Sermons whose bearing generally, and whose strong expressions, could only be justified on the ground of such a peculiar crisis as I have described. Most of those delivered in the latter part of the year, such as the twenty-first and twenty-third, were delivered under immediate personal alarm, and, for the most part, as the occasion of the moment called for them. I have recorded what was said as faithfully as from memory I could.

Farewell! dear friends. You fought this lesser battle of the Church as became good soldiers of Christ! Go on in faith.

“Peace be to you!”—their peace who stand in sentry, with God’s sword in hand—the peace of Christ’s loved champions, warring in His Sight.

W. J. E. B.

1851.



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SERMON I.

GOD'S GRACE AND MAN'S CO-OPERATION.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, IN THE ADVENT SEASON, 1849-50.)

REVELATION iii. 20.

“ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”

It is said by some persons that they cannot be religious, because Religion is the *gift of God*; and since God has not been pleased to bestow it on them, they cannot be blamed. On the contrary side, it is said by some persons that men are religious or not religious, according as they themselves please—that God has made us *creatures of reason*, and that by this reason, if rightly exercised, we may avoid vice and follow after holiness, may triumph over the temptations of nature and embrace the principles of Evangelical faith.

Now both these opinions are partly right and partly wrong. There is truth in each, but there is also falsehood in each; and whatever truth there is, (just as it happens in all cases of man's imperfect state,)

is poisoned and rendered nugatory by the falsehood which surrounds it. In the first opinion, that "*it is no fault of ours that we are not religious because Religion is God's gift:*" it is certainly true that Religion is God's gift, but then it is not true as a consequence, that if we are wicked or faithless we are not to be blamed; and for this reason, that God has abundantly furnished us with ways and means to gain that gift. In the second opinion, that "*we are creatures of Reason, and, therefore, have it in our own power to be religious if we please:*" it is quite true that our own exertions, and our own right use of the faculties of Reason, are necessary and essential to our being religious; but then it is false to say that they can be so irrespective of God. In both opinions, as being extremes, there is very great danger; in the first, lest we fall into a wilful blindness, and, pretending out of humility to be waiting for God, we become hardened in the iniquities of our own self-seeking; in the second, there is very great danger lest, trusting to our reason and our own natural power, we put God aside, and, despising His means of grace, neglect what He has appointed, both for the birth and the sustenance of our faith. In both cases, though their origin is totally distinct, yet the end to which they lead is the same. The man who thinks he can do *nothing* for himself, and the man who thinks he can do *everything* for himself, they both alike end in losing God. The man who thinks he can do nothing for

himself *loses God*, because God (so to speak) has no opportunity to come to him; and the man who thinks he can do everything for himself *loses God*, because God is shut out and despised by him, and being not required, never can draw near.

Now let it be our object to examine the real state of this case, as partly derived from one opinion and partly from the other; to set before you the way in which Holy Scripture describes the birth, progress, and perfection of Christianity in our hearts, how far our own co-operation is requisite in the work, and how far by itself it is unavailing,—how far God's Grace is requisite, and how far (speaking humanly) it is unavailing, *i.e.* unless met by the concurrence and co-operation of our own will, reason, and actions.

The text which has been selected will do this for us. It directs us evidently to three stages, or courses, of progress in Religion. 1, "*Behold I stand at the door and knock.*" 2, "*If any man will hear My Voice, and open the door.*" And, 3, "*I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.*" The first stage is the overture made by God—the initiation of a covenant—the sowing of a seed—the application of a principle—which is described as solely depending upon God. The second stage is the acceptance of the overture by man—the seconding or reception of the covenant—the absorption of the seed—the development of the principle, which is described as depending upon

man. If the first do not exist, the second cannot. If both together do not exist, the third cannot. But both together working and co-operating, then flows the third, which represents the exceeding great blessing and reward of faith in the heart of man; the full privileges, graces, and communions, which God promises to such as in this manner become the children of His Kingdom.

First, let us consider the overture made by God: "*Behold I stand at the door and knock.*" Who stands at the door? They are the words of our blessed Redeemer Himself. It is a highly figurative expression. There is a door, and the door is shut, and our Saviour is described as outside of the door seeking admittance. It is evidently a door excluding entrance, barred up and fastened by some obstacle from within; within the door so barred up and fastened resides the soul of man; the soul of man there dwells, shut up and held down by fastenings—dwells as in a house, with all its natural passions and sensual affections, its sole inhabitants, God excluded; it is there by nature proud, selfish, impure, ungodly, altogether unvisited by grace, in ignorance and in the dark, knowing nothing of the external light, but resting in itself, and contented with itself, and desirous of nothing beyond itself. It is plain from this figure, that until our Saviour, with His Gospel, comes to the door and knocks, one of these things must be the case—either the inhabitant within has been in ignorance

of Him, and so has shut Him out; or if he have not been in ignorance of Him, then, still worse, having known Him before, he has driven Him away by violence or insult.

The figure, then, expresses thus much, that in either case—*i. e.*, either the origin of religion, or the development of religion—the cause is external to ourselves, that cause being God. The first overtures or proposals are His, the growth or advancement is His, the restoration or receiving of any part of what is lost is His. If, in the one case, the inhabitant within the door has been in ignorance of Him, then the proposal comes of knowledge and light; if, in the other case, the inhabitant within is not ignorant of Him, but, once having known Him, has forgotten Him by negligence, or driven Him away by wilfulness, still, again, the proposal of a renewed friendship, the proposal or offer of a restoration of former privileges, equally originates with Him. In both cases it is He, our Lord Himself; not man, but God, Who says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.”

I. Let us take it in the first case, that of *ignorance*, and under this head we may consider both the heathen and the unbaptised. The shutting up of their hearts against God is not their own fault, seeing they have never known Him: I mean in His fulness of covenant in Christ. The light is no light to them, for God has not given it. The door is not expected to be opened by them, for God has not

knocked. It exactly agrees with what the Scripture describes as the state of man before baptism. Before baptism the soul may be described as within the door, shut up, fastened, not wilfully fastened, but ignorantly. In this state there is no salvation.

A man cannot get free of himself. A man cannot rise up and force open the door, and say, I *will* be saved—I *will* be enlightened—I will do it of my own accord and power. No; his sins, both of nature and of action, bind him down, and he cannot rise and open the door. He does not know that he has *need* of rising. All Scripture agrees in describing the state of the unbaptised as sinful—even a little child or infant as sinful and guilty in God's sight. We are told by our Lord Himself that "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." And in His charge to the Apostles the same truth is signified, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is *baptised* shall be saved." Not only he that believeth, but he that believeth and seals his belief by baptism.

In order, then, to be saved, we must be baptised; but baptism does not depend upon ourselves. No man can baptise himself. There must be a baptism of water, and a baptism of the Spirit. Neither of them can be of ourselves, but both from God. The baptism of water is from God indirectly, as coming through His chosen instrument the Church, and the

baptism of the Spirit is from God directly. Since it is true, then, that without the *birth by water and the Spirit* "*we cannot enter into the kingdom of God,*" and that without holy baptism *there is no remission of sins*, and since this baptism is of God, then of course it follows that the origin and source of religion is God. The little child is brought to the font—he is full of original sin, however innocent of actual sin. The sin of Adam by nature has made that child guilty, in the Sight of God, by his first birth, and he cannot of himself be saved from that guilt, but must have a *second* birth. The Church, accordingly, brings him to the water of baptism for that second birth. Behold it is Jesus Christ. It is our Saviour and Redeemer that stands at the door and knocks. He, by His Mediation and Atonement, promises the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit *comes* according to His promise. Now is the seed of life, though small, and imperceptible, sown in the child's heart; now is remission of sins freely given; now is the entrance into the kingdom of Heaven made plain, and the way of salvation his.

Some persons, not seeing any visible demonstration in baptism of the gift of the Spirit, have denied such a gift altogether, and have said, illustrating their remarks by some great instances of a sudden embracing of the faith of Christ out of the midst of sin, "I cannot understand how God should be limited in the operations of His grace to any one

specific means; nor can I see how the gift of faith can be said of necessity to attach itself to a mere outward ceremony." But be this as it may, the question is not touched as to the origin of religion being in God only. However vital a doctrine the regeneration of baptism must be considered, still, if it were entirely set aside, the doctrine which I am now setting forth would not be impugned; for the doctrine is merely this—that man can do nothing of himself. If the rationalist says, man's own inherent reason does enough, still it is God that caused the gift of reason; or if the Calvinist rises up and seeks to tie the conversion of a soul to some peculiar circumstance or crisis in life—to some movement of the passions or excitement of the feelings, and desires to point to the actual moment when the grace of God was first manifested to him, and that visibly and with a felt influence—still all that is nothing to the point; for through all it is nothing more than we just said, namely, that some movement of God is the origin of faith. He Who guides life, or Who shapes circumstances—Who causes the mind to be at work here or there, under this influence or that—Who brings us to that crisis of life where things are so tempered round us that we say, "This is of God"—Who manages all this, but God only? Any position in which we stand, any circumstance, any crisis, is just as much of God as that position, or circumstance, or crisis, which is to us baptism. It makes no difference in the conclu-

sion which now we are compelled to draw that religion comes of God—whether in baptism, as the Church teaches; or prior to it, or subsequent to it, as Dissenters teach—it is still of God. Whether it is merely intellectual and of the mind, it is still of God.

II. But that which is true of the beginning of our Christianity is no less true in all its progress—we grow up and advance in life. Frequently, too frequently, the door, which at first was shut from *ignorance*, or only from the sins of *nature*, and at which our Lord in His Mercy knocked, and to Him it was opened at the waters of our baptism, when we were made, out of children of wrath, children of grace—too frequently (if, indeed, it is ever otherwise) we have afterwards shut the door against Him by many actual sins of childhood and manhood, and, by a wilful disobedience, return to a state of ungodliness and heathen vice. The question, then, is, how are we to be restored from *this* state. If we fall from grace once given, what is to restore us then? Are we utterly lost and abandoned by God, or will God again vouchsafe to visit us? and if so, under what circumstances, and in what way? Does the privilege of *once* having received the Holy Spirit leave behind it any remnant of hope? if so, whence does it arise? Does it arise from within—from our own strength, or power, or understanding—or does it arise, as before, externally from God? Does *He* make the first movement and overture, or

do *we*? Is it *our* doing that we can repent and turn back to Him, and be reinstated in our privileges, or is it *His*? These, my brethren, are questions, as you must perceive, involving the most important considerations—considerations vital to us all—for who has not fallen from the grace of his baptism? Who has not sinned and forsaken God, though once His in the waters of regeneration?

I do not think that anything can be clearer than the statement of the tenth article: “The Condition of Man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.” And the same language is held in the sixth article, “Of Sin after Baptism:” “After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin; and *by the grace of God* we may arise again, and amend our lives.” But you will observe, “*BY THE GRACE OF GOD*”—not of ourselves. It matters not, then, whether we are speaking of sins before baptism, or sins after baptism. The doctrine seems to be, that whenever we are in a *state of sin*—be it what it may—we are in a state of alienation from God; and being in this state of alienation, we cannot turn to God *of ourselves*. Does Holy Scripture make

this out ? It does. Let us take all the different component parts of a man as affecting his moral and mental state, and see how Scripture speaks of them :—

1. Our *thoughts*. “We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves.”

2. Our *heart*. “The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?”

3. Our *mind*. “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.”

4. Our *will*. “It is God that worketh in us both to *will* and to do of His good pleasure.”

5. Our *power to act*. “To will is present with me ; but how to perform that which is good, I find not.”

6. Our *power to pray*. “The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.”

7. Our *power to understand the Scriptures*. It is shown by the disciples at Emmaus, who, after being with our Lord, and seeing Him, and conversing with Him for a long period, could not understand what was said, until “*He* opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.”

And these particulars are followed by continual general expressions, such as the following: “Without Me ye can do nothing.” No man can “say that

Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." And from the examples of many holy men, both in the Old Testament and the New—as David—not trusting in himself, but saying, "*Create* in me, O Lord, a clean heart, and *renew* a right spirit within me;" "*Incline* mine heart unto Thee;" "*Make* me to go in Thy paths;" "*Hold* Thou me up, and I shall be safe." And S. Paul himself says, "By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the *grace of God*, which was with me." And in another place he speaks of "a thorn in the flesh," by which he was buffeted; and God replied to him, as by a revelation—"My *grace* is sufficient for thee: My strength is made perfect in weakness."

There surely is no need of going further. Our *thoughts, heart, mind, will*, power to *act*, power to *pray, understand, believe*, all being so distinctly said to be *insufficient* in themselves for any purposes of holiness such as to please God, there remains no other course open to us than to acknowledge the original moving power of all that we can do in religion, to be vested in God, and in Him Alone. If *He* abstain from visiting us, then we die; if no call or suggestion from *Him* touch our hearts, we perish; if no coal of fire descend from *Him* to light the sacrifice of our altars, we are nothing. No sweet smelling savour can go up from *our* unhallowed sacrifice, unless He first send us

the grace by which we shall be stirred up to offer it. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that *not of yourselves*, it is the gift of God."

But our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. His object was, not to show a path of salvation, and then leave us to find it—not to convince us of sin, and then to forsake us in our futile attempts to obtain an exemption from its guilt—but to assist us, cheer us, put in our way the means of overcoming our difficulties, drive away evil things from us, suggest good things to us, and bring us to God, when we could not come ourselves. And this is beautifully expressed in the words of the text, "BEHOLD I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK." Though we certainly cannot in any way originate either faith or good works in ourselves, yet He, by the Holy Spirit, is ever ready at our hand; and when the *door* either of our *will*, or our *affections*, or our *understanding*, is barred up against His access by nature, "He stands at the door and *knocks*." You will carefully observe that He not only "*stands* at the door," by which is signified His continual readiness and desire to help us, but also "*He knocks*," by which is signified, that He makes an aggressive attempt to gain our attention. If the phrase were, "Behold I stand at the door," and that only, then it might only have signified thus: If you will pray, if you will *turn to Me*, if you will repent, if you will believe, I am ready to receive

you. But it is not so; there is an aggressive movement from God. "He stands at the door and KNOCKS."

And now, my brethren, you will be asking, How does this happen? It happens in many, very many ways.

You have nothing to do but simply to observe what human life is, and then you will readily understand how God works in the heart of man. Observe what God has done either publicly to us as a people, or privately to each one of us throughout our lives. Publicly to us as a people, God speaks to us by His Gospel and by His Church. First, we see around us, and within our hands, a holy Book which contains His revealed Word; the fact of this revelation of God's Will being here, is to every thinking mind as His Voice speaking to us. Secondly, we see around us, ourselves forming a part, His Church; a society of holy men confessing one faith, wrought together by a union of customs and doctrines, into one body, of which He is the Head, and we the members. This body we trace as existing from Him and by Him, under the Apostles first, then their successors, then Bishop succeeding Bishop, through a long series of years, until we find the present pastors and bishops preaching Christ Crucified, and baptizing in His Name. Then we see in this Church many ordinances of His institution: above all, the Holy Eucharist, with Its offerings and oblations; the Body of our

Redeemer, and the Blood of our Redeemer, given by the priest, and received by the faithful. All these things we see wonderfully and miraculously preserved throughout ages, according to His promise; the Church teaching them, labouring for them, and suffering for them; and the gates of Hell not prevailing against it.

For instance, who can enter this holy Tabernacle of the Lord, and behold the signs of His Living Presence here on every side around him—this holy Altar on which the oblation of His Body and Blood, Who died for us, is weekly offered; this Font, filled with pure water, by which in holy Baptism the sins of nature are washed away according to His promise; these holy servants of God occupied in the offices of *His* priesthood, Who promised, eighteen centuries ago, that He would be with us always, even unto the end of the world; Who can behold us at this time a congregation lifting up joint prayers and praises for *His* glory, Who, eighteen centuries ago, promised that when two or three should be met together in His Name, there He would be in the midst of them; who, I repeat, can behold these perpetual living witnesses of God, and not reflect that they are His ways of doing what He said He would do: "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock?*"

But, again, not only is our text verified in these which I may call natural or general ways of God's speaking to us, but there are also, in each one of

us, particular and individual ways in which He equally testifies of Himself. There is a still small voice within each man's heart, accusing or else excusing to himself everything he says, thinks, and does.

It is not until a very long period that this still small voice is quite silenced. Time after time it makes demands upon us, warns us, expostulates with us, argues with us, not suffering us to fall into sin without a check. There are, besides, chastisements sent from God, in sickness, worldly disappointments, sorrows, bereavements of those we love, death of friends—all causing us to reflect, and give heed to our ways, and return to God. It was the case with David, who, sinning fearfully against God, was as fearfully punished and chastened under His wrath, a wrath which worked mercy, so that he said: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes."

There are also fears and terrors where sin is obstinately persisted in, causing us to tremble at the anticipated judgments of God. It was the case with Felix, who, when Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, trembled." There are also mercies and loving-kindnesses unexpectedly visiting us, causing us to be softened towards God in spirit and in love. It was the case with Cornelius, who, without any thought or knowledge of such an event, was suddenly visited by a vision from God, leading him, a heathen, to

Baptism and Christianity. All these, my brethren, and many such others, are ways in which, as it is said in the text, "God stands at the door and knocks."

If, therefore, we say, as Scripture bids us to say, "that of ourselves we can do no good thing," it does not follow that we should say, being guilty of every evil thing, it is no fault of ours. If the opinion is true, as certainly it must be confessed to be true by every one who knows his own heart, that both faith and good works must come from God, it does not follow that we, having no faith and no good works, are, therefore, to be held harmless; very far from it.

In such a country as this, with the holy Catholic Church of Christ sending forth her branches far and wide among us—with all the Gospel promises fulfilled, in the privileges and ordinances of one of His most favored people—with every street in some way recording His Name—with all our customs and habits founded on His Word; in such a country as this, there can be no one out of the reach of God's Holy Spirit, either of love or of warning.

If it be true that we cannot originate anything good, it is also true that God originates everything that is good for us. If it be true that we have, in ourselves, neither will, nor understanding, nor affection towards God, it is also true that God furnishes, and puts before us, both a will, and an understand-

ing, and an affection towards Him. If it be true that we are disinclined to love God, it is also true that God is not disinclined to love us; but that He is, in the multitudinous ways of His Grace, drawing us to Himself, and forbidding us not.

No man here can say, God's Voice has never sounded within the precincts of his dwelling. No man can say, the Hand of God has never knocked at the door of his tabernacle; and if so, why is he yet in sin? At whose charge must it be that he is still far away from God? No; the one truth remains fixed and unshaken—namely, "THAT WE CAN DO NOTHING OF OURSELVES;" conjointly with the other, that IF WE ARE IN SIN, IT IS OUR OWN FAULT.

SERMON II.

GOD'S GRACE, AND MAN'S CO-OPERATION.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, IN THE ADVENT SEASON, 1849—50.)

REVELATION iii. 20.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

I HAVE endeavored, in the former sermon, to show how true it is, that without God's gift we can have no religion; and I dwelt upon the natural weakness, incapacity, and sinfulness of man; but, at the same time, I endeavored to divest that truth of the exaggeration and error which is thrown over it by some when they say, that their own exertions avail nothing, and that whether they strive or do not strive it is the same in the Eyes of God.

But I now proceed further, and from the second clause in the text—"If any man hear My Voice and open the door"—I strive to show the process by which God's Grace once given is to become effectual; that is to say, what man's part is in his salvation, and how he is to work—how, although in the

outset, as we have abundantly confessed, man can do nothing; still, in the stages subsequent to the outset, man can do a great deal.

If it be true that the mere offer of grace to man is in itself salvation, then these three grievous errors, in points of doctrine, will follow:—1. The doctrine of reprobation; 2. The doctrine of the inutility of good works; and 3. The denial of the doctrine of the future state being a state of rewards and punishments.

I. It is plain from Holy Scripture, and is a truth, I believe, conceded by all, that in the visible Church of Christ, or, as it is frequently called in Holy Scripture, “the kingdom of heaven,” there are both bad and good. We learn this from the parable of the net, which took up, and held within it, both bad fish and good; from the parable of the wheat and tares, both being purposely suffered to grow together; and from the parable of the marriage feast, in which the servants went out and brought together “as many as could be found, both bad and good.” It is evident that the Gospel kingdom is not a selection of saints, perfected in righteousness at once, to the exclusion of any commixture of sinners; but one of saints and sinners combined—saints varying in degree of holiness, falling and restored; sinners having fallen, awaking up, to righteousness, and sinning no more. But they are not generally known, neither can be, to the world. Before men they are undistinguished, except may

be in some of the greater extremes on either side. The world rolls on from age to age, and holds them all in the great body, which is the Church, neither pronouncing salvation, nor venturing to decree damnation, until the harvest comes. But then comes the distinction. Then no longer mixed, they shine forth on the one side—they fall into utter darkness on the other. The reapers make the bundles up of tares to burn them, and they gather the wheat into the garner.

This being the acknowledged doctrine of Holy Scripture, how can it be a truth accordant with it, that the mere calling of a Christian ensures his salvation? for, let us observe, that if the mere calling, or, in other words, the gift of grace, does so ensure it, the absence of the calling, or negation of the gift, ensures the opposite; and so, presuming on the doctrine of grace as compulsory in its tendency, we must presume on its contrary as equally compulsory; and then we are inevitably driven to this conclusion, that the souls of men are of two distinct classes, and only two—one predestinated to eternal glory, the other to eternal damnation. But how can this state of things be either consistent with the known Justice of God, or His Mercy, or His Love? If not, we must determine, and be quite sure in our own minds, that the mere offer of salvation on God's part is not in itself sufficient, but that it must be followed up by something on man's part also.

II. The second erroneous doctrine would be this: that obedience and conforming of the life of man in moral virtue to the laws of God is not required; for if the offer of grace is sufficient, the thing is done, and nothing changing it, a life of sin cannot change it. And if a life of sin cannot change it, the idea of good works as necessary to salvation is exploded. But God has expressly said in Holy Scripture, "Hereby we do know, that we love God, *if we keep His commandments*;" and again, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." But what is the fact in daily life? We see many duly baptized, and who thus, according to the Scriptures, have been incorporated into the Body of Christ, and have received His Grace; we see them, in the commission of actual sin, disobeying the commandments of God; we see them, if not in neglect of everything holy, at least passing by everything that is holy; we see them dead, spiritless, lukewarm, as if they had nothing in common with God, as if they had no part or lot with Him, but were rather on the side of him who was their enemy and destroyer. But how can these two contradictions be equally true: namely, that the keeping of God's commandments is necessary, and the mere offer of grace sufficient? they cannot both be true. We come, then, again to the conclusion, that the offer of salvation made on the part of God's Mercy is not in itself sufficient, but that man must do something on his own part also.

The third erroneous teaching is this: we are told by Holy Scripture, that our future existence is to be one of *rewards and punishments*. Such good things as pass man's understanding are in reserve for the righteous, joy and peace and never-ending rest; wailing and gnashing of teeth, the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched, for the unrighteous. Incentives are put before us to encourage us to good; fears and alarms to deter us from evil: "Unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile." But wherefore this—wherefore that awful picture of the Last Day in S. Matthew's Gospel, of the goats and the sheep, their several stations on the right hand and on the left, and those depending on their works of mercy and of love, performed or not performed; wherefore all this—these incentives, these fears, these pictures of reward, these dreadful alternatives of horror and of woe; wherefore, if, after all, the mere offer of grace at the beginning had been sufficient? Surely it follows as before, that, in order to salvation, something depends on man himself.

These views of the subject fall readily in with what we see and observe in the works of nature.

The analogy of Nature with Revelation has ever been a favorite argument for its truth, and it is no less so in this particular than in any other. Now, in nature there are many gifts from God, many properties, many powers which lie undeveloped, and apparently without performing their end, until man steps in and applies them to his use, by his own power and strength. That water should find its own level, is a gift or property attached to that element by God in nature. But large cities such as this in which we dwell could not be supplied with water sufficient for its inhabitants by that mere gift or property. It remains for man's reason, and for man's skill and science, to make use of that gift, and apply it. In the sciences there is the same principle, particularly in Chemistry. That herbs and minerals should have certain powers to alleviate pain, and to cure diseases, is a gift from God; but this gift lies hid and useless, until man, by his reason and skill, brings out that gift for the blessing which God, no doubt, intended therein to convey to His creatures.

In the Mechanical arts we see the same thing: Certain powers exist in the lever, the wheel, and the screw. These are powers and gifts implanted by God, no doubt meant for man's use and blessing; but it is not their mere existence, as mechanical powers inherent in nature, that procures us the blessings resulting from them. Man must step in, as it were, take them up and apply them.

It remains with him, by the exercise of his reasoning power, his skill, and his industry, to work out the effects and results of these gifts as furnished for him, and inherent in the gifts by God's Grace imparted.

Agriculture furnishes us with another equally strong illustration. There is before us, on the one hand, the seed, with its inherent properties of expansion, growth, and fruit; on the other, the existence of a soil, containing certain properties within of giving nourishment to the seed, and bringing forth these properties into life. But neither the existence of the seed nor of the soil, independently of each other, are of any use in the development of the fruits, of which man is the expectant, until he himself, by another power of skill, adaptation, and culture, which is his (of God also), is brought to bear upon the two preceding powers; and the three, working together, produce the result which God of His Infinite Mercy designed. If man would see his granaries filled with corn for the sustenance of life, it will neither do for him to contemplate the seed in his storehouse unmoved, nor the rich surface of the earth lying in its beauty, in a wide expanse before him, uncultivated. He must apply himself to the issue—to the plough, the harrow, and the weeding, and then scatter the seed of God's gift. So alone will he ever see God's intended harvest.

Now, what is true in nature is also true, in its

proportion, in GRACE. There are certain *gifts*, *properties*, inherent *virtues*, implanted by the Holy Spirit in the heart of man. These gifts, or properties, or virtues, may be hidden, lost, or perish, or, at any rate, lie useless, if man does not take them up, use his own reason, adapt them to their purposes, and cultivate them. But the moment he does so adapt or cultivate them, then their fruits are displayed. The moment man, by that power which is within him, (which is also God's gift, therefore he has nothing to boast of,) the moment he exercises and practises what is given him to know and believe, then, and not till then, the work of salvation has fairly commenced.

But it is time to show more particularly how this is to be done. The text suggests to us that the operations of man on the one part, in regard to what God furnishes on the other part, are twofold. First, it is "*to hear*"—"If any man *hear My Voice*;" that is, receive what God gives, accept what He offers, learn what He proposes: and the second is, to *act* upon the hearing—"If any man hear My Voice and *open the door*;" that is, not only listen and learn, but act upon the learning, do what is said, put into operation that which is suggested, finish and perfect that which is begun as an impulse from God. Let us observe these two points:

I. The Prophet Samuel, when a child, being called of God, was directed by Eli to say, "Speak,

Lord, for thy servant heareth." Saul, in the Evangelical Dispensation, when he fell to the earth, and heard a Voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me," however great his unbelief had been *before*, did not *then* turn away with an obstinate or unwilling mind, but gave his attention to the call, and said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" and, having so said, continued, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" This is just our case. The first commencement on our part is to hear what God puts before us.

And what is it that God puts before us? It is not now conveyed in any such miraculous calls as those just mentioned, to Samuel and to Saul; but there are those ordinary calls in which God speaks to us even now, and which I mentioned in the former sermon; namely, the existence of His Revealed Word; the existence of His Church; His Sacraments; the Power of Conscience; Affliction; Personal Mercies; and the like.

The question, then, is, "*Do we hear them?*"

Some, indeed, when our Saviour "*stands at the door and knocks,*" will not take even the first step, and "*hear.*" Some there are who make light of His Word, and His Church, and His Sacraments, and deny them all Grace. Indeed, this teaching is now most fearfully prominent in the Church. The need of Baptism is nationally denied as the necessary channel of the Grace of the Spirit, in the initiation of the Christian covenant; and the Blessed

Presence of the Body and Blood of our Redeemer in the holy Eucharist is made no matter of faith. Some are found who openly preach and say that the Apostolic commission of the Clergy is an idle fable; and some go on to say, that, to entrust the spiritual power of the keys to fallible man, is a blasphemous deceit. And so whole congregations of men are found without any idea, or even thought, that there is Grace near them; that God's Holy Spirit is at all ready for them; that there is any thing at all meant or designed for them of God; and, therefore, of course they are utterly deficient in that very primary step, even of hearing. How can they hear when they stedfastly presume that there is nothing for them to hear. They deny the very first condition of Christianity. They thrust themselves out of its pale, and sink back to the uncalled and uncovenanted heathen.

Let us hope, however, that in this extreme sense those who refuse to hear are not many. Most men of an intellectual understanding, and even of mere worldly information, looking around them on the history of the world, do acknowledge God as their Creator, and His Word as truly coming from Him, and the Church His witness and representative on earth. But, then, with this bare assent of the mind to an historical fact they rest content. They only give their acknowledgment as to a truth confessed and allowed by the world; they do not embrace it as an article of faith; and therefore still, though

they in some sense "hear," it is not in the full sense. They do not hear and receive *all* that is conveyed, only a part. It is not the combined harmony of music sinking within the heart, and absorbed into the very soul and marrow, but it is the confused sound as of a jarring discord of instruments out of tune. The Holy Scriptures are God's Word; they are acquainted with the abstract truth, and know it, but they take no advantage of this fact, they neither study the Holy Scriptures nor love them. The Church is in operation before them; they see her and acknowledge her, but they neither rely upon her as an interpreter of the Scriptures, nor as a guide in faith, nor as a ruler in discipline; they still rest upon their own judgment, and will not concede when their own will is opposed to hers, nor give way to her authority when the world comes in against her. The privileges of public worship are before them, and the temples of the Living God open wide their gates that they may go into them and pray. This they know as a fact, but as a fact they leave it. They attach no importance to the Presence of God therein, nor any special value to the sanctity of the Prayers which there are offered; nor do they heed the promise of the Lord Jesus being Himself there, "where two or three are gathered together," further than a general recognition of public worship as an abstract duty. They have a knowledge of these things that they exist, that they *are*, that a great number of persons do appreciate them, but they

seek not to apply the duties recognised in the abstract to themselves in particular. They do not wish for any further knowledge than that which they have already, nor seek to place themselves in any position by which a higher degree of religion might be imparted to them, but are content with what they have. Being blind, they see not; and deaf, they hear not, neither do they understand.

Again, in things more internal and individual, God speaks to men by their conscience. In sin and sensual indulgences, this monitor warns, expostulates, terrifies, but she is heard only for a moment, she is immediately quenched, either in some more violent outbreaks of indulgence, or she is deceived, or flattered, by the sophistries of an accommodating world.

Or again, God's Hand is upon them by means of affliction—in suffering, disease, death, He speaks to them. Like the brute beasts, they see nothing of God notwithstanding, except it be to murmur, or become hardened and desperate. It does not reach them further than to astonish and perplex, not to soften or humiliate. These men are like Pharaoh king of Egypt, who, though God stood and knocked at his door, was yet resolved and determined not to hear. And though the voice was very loud which worked such devastation and destruction throughout his kingdom, still the wicked king was even as a flint, and gave his attention to nothing that was set before him; and so he perished in his

gainsaying ; or like Balaam, the wicked prophet, who, knowing that the Lord was speaking, knowing that His Will was contrary to that which he was doing, still gave no attention to it ; but the Voice of God passed by, and what God spake he would not hear. They are like those men in the parable of the sower, who are described by the seed which fell by the way-side. The way-side is so hard, that no passage for its entrance is permitted. "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh that wicked one, and catcheth away that which is sown in the heart, lest they should believe and be saved."

The seed is there—they know it; but having no soil for its root, they care not, neither give heed, but suffer it to be overcome of the devil; and being hardened in their hearts, as the pavement on which men walk, they pass God by, and hear Him not.

II. But it is not at this first stage only that men fail. If they do fail in some degree here, how much more frequently do they fail, and to what a greater degree in the second stage. They are, for the most part, like Naaman, the Syrian, willing enough to "*hear*" about the cure of the leprosy, but not so willing to put the process of the cure into operation, comparing God's commands with their own desires, and murmuring to find them disagreeing. They "*hear*," but do not "*open the door*," gladly hearing may be at first, and even with joy receiving; yet so receiving as into stony ground, only during for

a while; for presently persecution ariseth because of the Word, and the sun arises and dries it up, and the seed perishes.

The point is this: God calls; but at the same time that He calls, He puts before us certain things to do. The call *places* us in His Kingdom. The thing which we are to do *retains* us in His Kingdom. The invitation gives us the birth—the work to be done, in consequence of the invitation, gives us growth, fulfilment, and life. The former without the latter is as a new-born babe that never grows to manhood—the intention of its being is cut short, and perishes.

It is evident that this may be done in several particulars. I will select two:—

1. *Hearing God's Word.* It is evident that hearing God's Word by sermons is one material way of religious instruction; and justly so; for it is said, "How shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard; and how shall they hear without a Preacher?" Now, under this ordinance let us look at the general aspect of our churches, and compare the vast multitudes of hearers with the very scanty number of doers. How many sit down to hear a sermon as though considering it a mere subject for their admiration, or their criticism—not their instruction; or looking upon it as a mere passive submission of themselves to the duty of listening for a certain period

of time, as though the whole business belonged to the *Preacher*, and no responsibility whatever attached to *themselves*; as though the *effect* of what should be heard were immaterial, so long as something should be heard for form's sake.

It is wonderful, indeed, how men with reason and understanding, able and intelligent men, honest, and, in other respects, sincere men, *can*, Sunday after Sunday, profess to seek a means of grace in hearing sermons, and yet never do—and not only never do, but never intend to do, what such hearing involves. “Take heed how ye hear,” saith Jesus Christ (as though a great responsibility attached to *hearing*); but, nevertheless, with many the mere act of hearing is sufficient as an exercise of the understanding upon points of abstract theory, not to *themselves* in any way applicable. They acknowledge the arguments, allow the premises, find no fault with the conclusions, praise the exhortations, and acquiesce *generally* in the rebukes of him who is set over them in the Lord. But still, not for one instant do they imagine that the points which are set before them are meant for some change, repentance, or amendment in their own lives. They “*hear*,” but do not go on to open the door. It is very well; it is very beautiful; it is very true; but in such an admission their thoughts stop short, and they advance not. It is as the prophet Ezekiel describes, “With their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after

covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, and do them not."

II. Or take it in the great question of Sacramental Grace. It is observable how many instances there are of "calling" into God's Kingdom, followed up by sacramental privileges upon the call being heard, and its duties done. S. Paul we have mentioned, but there is also Cornelius, the Eunuch, Lydia, and the jailor at Philippi. These all are instances of a call made by the Holy Spirit—the call heard, not only heard, but acted upon; and then, immediately subsequent, the sacramental grace of God's covenant sealed to the individual in holy Baptism. Whereas, on the other side, equal calls are notified in the instances of Felix, and of Agrippa; and yet these calls being heard, but not acted upon, have failed in leading to any higher degree of grace. Felix trembling in conscience, and Agrippa "almost persuaded to be a Christian," are types of a thousand professors of the cross to this day, verging to the brink of a true, contrite, and penitent heart, and *almost saved by hearing*, but just so much short of it, as finally to miss it altogether, because they have not acted upon their convictions in doing what the call made to them demanded.

To us, brethren, being already called in holy Baptism, the Blessed Eucharist is the chief sacra-

ment by which our attention is directed to hear what God says. But observe how the great bulk of men conduct themselves in respect of it. Invitation after invitation comes to them in the words of the holy Scriptures, and in the words of the Church which they "*hear*." Of this holy sacrament they are aware as "one necessary to salvation." It cannot be said that they know not of it. The Scriptures give us the words of our Blessed Saviour: "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." "He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." The Church points out the same thing: "Wherefore, most dearly beloved in Christ, take ye good heed, lest ye, withdrawing yourselves from this holy supper, provoke God's indignation against you." All this is heard, all this is acknowledged, but no door is "opened," in order to come out and pursue it.

Of the thousands that come to hear sermons how few come to receive Sacraments. Sermons may be good, but, however good, they are but the words of a feeble man; but Sacraments are an actual communion with God. Sermons may be useful, as leading the *way* to gain God's Grace; but Sacraments impart to us the very Grace. How lamentable, then, it is to see the multitudes who come to "*hear*" the one, but never "*open the door*" to receive the other; exclaiming, indeed, that they seek God, and wish for His Holy Spirit; yet, when

God stands ready for them, and the Holy Spirit is willing to communicate with them, then flying from that which they say they desire, and refusing to receive that which they say they seek. He that never "*hears*," *i.e.*, he that is professedly a profane or ungodly man, professedly dedicated to the world—a hater of God—a sensual man—a sinner in some confirmed act or habit, and not repenting; when such an one is not found at the steps of the Altar none can wonder; nay, such an one we should repel and cast out with fearful horror, lest, eating the Body of Christ, he should be "eating and drinking damnation to himself." But of those who have achieved the initiative point, and do "*hear*;" who do understand—who do recognise the necessity, and do see the spiritual blessings of this holy ordinance; knowing that God's grace is therein specially conveyed to man, and that his soul is, in an especial manner, washed by the Blood and fed by the Body of Christ; that such an one, seeing the Eucharistic Feast prepared, and the invitation made, and the ministers of the Lord at their station; should flee out of the Church, as it were from a *danger*, rather than press forward to the Altar as to a succour, and help, and blessing; should, with the ungodly, the profane, and the excommunicate, turn their backs upon the reception of that grace which they say they are anxious to obtain, and without which they know that they must perish,—this is, indeed, a sight at once astounding

and melancholy. My brethren, is there such a thing as having too much of God's grace?—as living too closely in the Spirit? Is it possible that we can get into danger, because we are too often in communion with God? Is it consistent with the dealings which should exist between man and God, that man should say, "There is a blessing beyond that door—I know it, but I will not open it." Yet this is what they say, who, hearing what God commands, "Take and eat this in remembrance of Me," yet fly from the Altar where He is, and will not receive Him, nor have Him in remembrance. This is what they say, who, while they acknowledge in theory that unless they eat and drink His Flesh and Blood, Who was crucified on the tree for man's sins, they shall have no life, yet go on from day to day, month to month, year to year, and live a voluntary death. It is one of those phenomena in religion which accord with the phenomena of nature, so utterly inexplicable that we have only to sit down and wonder at ourselves, as forming, in God's works, the greatest wonder of them all.

I have now explained the manner in which the call of God to salvation may be taken up and used by man. You will observe that it all turns simply on the point of using in action the means of grace WHICH GOD PROVIDES. The means of grace, when so used, must of course proceed further into *works of faith*; and that of course they will—for no one can be presumed to be a constant worshipper, lift-

ing up impure hands; or a constant reader of the Scriptures, and yet a fornicator or a sensual man; or, above all, a constant *communicant*, and yet be sinful in his every-day life.

Grace obtained must work its effects—Faith must have her fruits—the Holy Spirit must *shew* forth His gifts; and, therefore, as I shall proceed, I hope to show, in the third part of this subject, that if we do but our part in *opening the door*, other things will immediately follow.

The Gospel is a “*marriage feast*.” The marriage feast of a King’s Son. All were called in into that marriage feast, called out of the highways and hedges, both good and bad; and they entered in. They found all things prepared, oxen and fatlings, and even the wedding garments, even these the King had prepared, according to the custom, for the guests. The only act which He required of them was to *put on this wedding garment*.

This they were to do *themselves*. “But when the King came in to see the guests, He saw one which had not put on the wedding garment,”—the one only thing which He required of him on his part, either out of idleness, or apathy, or perhaps obstinacy, this one only thing the guest had refused to do. And when the King, examining the guests, detected him, He said, “How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?” And he was speechless. And the King said, “Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

SERMON III.

COMMUNION WITH GOD, THE RESULT OF GOD'S GRACE,
AND MAN'S CO-OPERATION.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE EPIPHANY, 1850.)

REVELATION iii. 20.

“ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”

It is said by our Blessed Lord, “ If any man will do His Will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself;” wherein we see very strongly the result of a certain contingency. The result, knowledge of the truth. The contingency, doing God's Will, at least a *willingness* to do it; for in the original it is thus, “ If any is *willing* (Θελει) to do God's Will.” It means this: The contingency on which a knowledge of truth depends is an obedient spirit. There must first be a willing mind, an aptness to receive impressions, and a desire to follow and to act upon them, then is further given knowledge of truth and faith; and

this exactly accords with the doctrine set forth in the preceding sermon.

In another place it is said, "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." We infer, then, that there are some persons who do *not* receive Him, and to those persons He does *not* give such power. What is the power? To become the sons of God. In other words, to be incorporated with God, to be born again of God; for we are sons of *man* by nature—we become sons of *God* by grace. This power, then, in its full sense, is dependent on something in man himself, *i.e.*, on the manner of man's reception of the power; the offer and the gift comes first, the reception second. But the reception in the affirmative, or negative, is, as man himself shall say. And this, again, exactly accords with the doctrine set forth in the preceding sermon.

In the same way as you here find it taught in words, you may find it illustrated by example. For instance, in the conduct of Abram. He was called out of Ur in the Chaldees, himself a heathen, to become a father of many nations in God. If, on the principle of not knowing whither he was to go, he had hesitated, and not received the call, then those consequences never would have followed, which, as we know, did follow, just in proportion to his faithful reception of the offer of grace imparted. It was the same in the conduct of the Apostles at the day of Pentecost. Our Saviour had

said, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." This was His parting command. If this command, though the Apostles knew nothing of what it meant, still if this command, on a mere principle of obedience, had not been followed up, then no further grace could have been vouchsafed to them; and being scattered from Jerusalem before the time, the descent of the Holy Spirit could not have affected them; but as it came to pass, the command being obeyed, those peculiar gifts of the Spirit descended at the time and place promised, and the Apostles were endued with power to preach the words of salvation to every nation under Heaven. They had received certain offers; they were to receive greater offers, if only they would act on what these offers inferred. They did so act; greater gifts followed, and the Church was perfected.

The same was the case with S. Paul. If Saul, when miraculously called by the light from Heaven, had been content with saying, "What shall I do, Lord?" and then had not done what he was commanded, nothing further would have followed; but as it was, he simply acted in the manner he was commanded; knowing not what it meant, or whither it would lead, he arose and went to the city, and met Ananias, and was baptised. Then upon this act of obedience further grace was manifested; he became the Apostle of the Gentiles, and was admit-

ted, as no other man ever was, into visions and revelations of the Lord.

The same was the case with Cornelius; we find him, in the first instance, acting up to the light which he had as a heathen, engaged in alms and prayers: further light, therefore, was given; and it is curious to see how, in proportion, his obedience, or good works, tally with his progress in faith. First, alms and prayers are his obedience; then a vision comes from God to *call him*. That vision was not itself an admission into Christianity, but a call to further obedience; or, as it may be said, a specific act of obedience; the former having been general—he acted on the vision—he sent men to Joppa—he conversed with S. Peter—and the end was further light, and further grace, until the whole scene terminated in S. Peter's exclamation, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we."

This very same process, we may be perfectly sure, will apply to *ourselves*. Something is to be done. An act of obedience is set before us, and demanded of us. Faith would direct us, even like Abraham, to go out and do it, not knowing whither we were going. But if, when God advances, we make no advance; if, when He says, Here is an act for you to perform, we refuse to perform that act, then how can we expect any further evidences of His Spirit?

Not doing His Will in the things we are told to be His Will, how can we expect to know of His doctrine? Not receiving Him, when He has manifested Himself, how can we expect the power to become His sons? Not opening the door, when He has knocked, and we confess that we *hear*, how then can He enter, or dwell within our tabernacle? This doctrine being clearly established in the mind, let us now pursue it to its results. We are presumed to be in the condition of persons receiving gifts; in proportion as we receive, we have further gifts; in proportion as we examine, we have further light; in proportion as we act, we have further blessings, until at length the whole character, in the double operations of grace from God, and obedience in ourselves, advances to the highest point of our Christian privilege. What is that highest point? It is described in the text in the figurative words, "*I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me.*" I would describe it shortly by the one word—*Communion*.

First, "*I will come in to him.*" God's entrance, and making man's body, as it is described in other places of Scripture, "*His temple*"—His "*abiding place.*"

Secondly, "*I will sup with him, and he with Me,*"—not only I with him, but he with Me,—conveying a mutual participation of gifts, each joining with the other, in alternations of good, each communicating to the other his mutual blessings.

Communion with God! Communion between the Creator and the creature! between the Infinite and the finite! the Omnipotent and the weak! the Everlasting and the perishing! An entire and unreserved participation in all the privileges which God has to bestow! God speaking to man, and receiving him into His Own Arms, and blessing him as His Own child! Surely, these are great things to follow our obedience, great things to miss by our *dis*-obedience. The repetition of the words, "I will sup with him, and he with Me," seems to signify the most intimate and endearing relationship. There cannot be any state of glory or felicity, any degree of love and friendship, to which this description will not entitle those to look forward in hope, who obey God, and hear His Voice, and open the door; as, indeed, it is expressly said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

But let us see more closely what this "communion" is. The communion with God mentioned in the text will divide itself into that which regards the present world, and that which regards the future world. In the future world only can we arrive at its completion; because in the future world only can we be divested of the frail and imperfect bodies from which here we cannot escape. And as long as our present bodies do exist, so long are we liable to error, and relapse, and loss of

sanctity; and that which we gain to-day we may lose again to-morrow. But still, even in this world, we *begin* the communion with God. "I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me," refers, in its commencement, most assuredly, to our present state. If we do not commence it here we shall never complete it hereafter. To enjoy the invisible or triumphant Church in heaven, we must *commence* in the visible or militant Church on earth; to have the spiritual body with God, we must first have the earthly body. In short, we must pass through imperfection, in order to gain perfection. We begin, then, *here*; and then we go on step by step, from little to great. We grow in grace; first, babes, feeding on milk, as saith the Apostle; then men, feeding on strong meat; and so advancing. But still, what is this communion? We want to know the nature of it. In its general features we may define it to be this: "*Oneness with God.*" It may be called identity with God—similarity with God—fellowship with God; but, perhaps, ONENESS with God will embrace all that can be said.

It is thus our Saviour prays for us: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be ONE, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us." And, in the Epistle to Corinthians it is said, "He that is joined to the Lord is ONE SPIRIT." It is also im-

plied by the indwelling of the Father and the Son, as being One, in the body and soul of the regenerated man. "If a man love Me, he will keep My sayings, and My Father will love him, and *We will come and make Our abode with him.*"

It will embrace these three particulars: 1. Oneness of mind with God; 2. Oneness of interest with God; 3. Oneness of life with God. Let us analyse each of these points, and then we shall the better determine the exceeding height and glory of this privilege which God, of His Mercy, thus permits to man.

I. First, then, *Oneness of mind with God.* The mind, of course, must be the beginning and moving principle of the communion; because the mind is the source of all else. The wishes, hopes, or desires, spring from the mind; the habits, the character, the actions, spring from the mind. The beginning, then, or rudiment of the communion, lies in the mind; and so we may suppose that there is imparted from God to man (if we may so speak with reverence) a portion of the Mind that is in Him. Now, we have scriptural authority to use this language. S. Paul, in 1 Cor. ii., speaks thus: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God but he that is spiritual judgeth all things For who hath known the Mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him. But we have the Mind of Christ." That is, the wicked, carnal, or unregenerate man, does not

know the Mind of God, but the righteous do acquire His Mind. They know His Mind, for God imparts it to them. As it is said in the same chapter: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him; even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now, we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

This communion of the Spirit gives us an insight into God's Ways. We see and understand His plans. His Mind is opened to us, and our mind is brought up to His.

Then, in proportion as the Mind of God is imparted to us, our own natural mind declines. That which is called, in contradistinction to the Mind of God, the "fleshly mind," the "carnal mind," the "vanity of our mind," and the like, this is weakened, dislodged, and finally disappears. There comes to us—(2 Tim. i. 7)—"the spirit of a sound mind;" and "that Mind is in us, which was in Christ Jesus" (Phil. ii. 5). We have no longer a desire or impulse to act in opposition to God; but, on the contrary, our impulse is to act just as pleases Him; we become like Him; and we are one with Him.

Most of our difficulties and miseries in this world—our temptations, our sufferings, our sorrows—arise from a certain disposition within us to yield to

natural impulses. However well we may be acquainted with our duty in times of coolness and reflection, yet the natural bent or impulse of our mind drives us to act in a contrary direction. In proportion as this mind of our flesh prevails, so are we destitute of the Mind of God. In proportion as it is overcome, so are we endued with the Mind of God. In proportion as natural impulses lose their force, the Divine Mind enters in, and so are we safer, surer, and happier. Then is everything of this world, as belonging to this world, of inferior consequence to us. It comes to us with a different aspect. That which men of the world value, we do not value. That which excites the sensual and self-indulgent, does not excite us. The man to whom is imparted "the Mind of God" sees things from a higher point, measures things by a more elevated scale, draws his reasonings from a purer school, observes where other men are blind, and conquers where other men yield. S. Paul describes himself in this very light, as if he were in a double capacity—partly as under the "*law of his members*," partly as under the "*law of his mind*." The law of his mind as a regenerate Christian, and baptized, and in communion with God, is described as struggling against the law of his members. In just proportion as the law of his mind, which was in that sense *the Mind of God*, prevailed, so was he victorious over the flesh; and this mind was given him of God. It was the gift of the Spirit.

II. Secondly, there is a *oneness of interest*. Those who are one with each other not only have the same moving impulse, but that moving impulse directs them to the same ends. That which is an object of attainment to the one, is also an object of attainment to the other. Therefore, their affections are set upon the same things. What is hated, or feared, or shunned by one, is so by both—and the reverse; what is loved, is loved by both; what is hoped for, is hoped for by both; or, as it may shortly be expressed, their interests are the same. We can, in some degree, obtain a notion of what this feeling may be by a reference to that holy estate, which God has marked in a peculiar manner by a sacramental blessing—the holy estate of matrimony.

Two are joined together, in God, and made one flesh. When once so made, they cannot be put asunder. Their objects and interests, their fears and hopes, become identical. They have no longer any separation, nor are considered as individuals—but one. New relationships spring up from their union; and when they do, they are to both the same. Everything which affects them, either for good or evil, affects both of them together—never one without the other.

So is our communion with God, in the interest of all which happens in the circumstances around us. Nothing can take place affecting the one, without in a similar manner affecting the other. Let sin incur the anger, hatred, or grief of God—as it is

said of our Lord in S. Mark, "When He had looked round about Him in anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts"—so it will incur the anger, hatred, or grief of him who is in communion with God; as it is said in the Psalm, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee; and am I not grieved with them that rise up against Thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred. I count them mine enemies." The enemies of God were accounted the enemies of David. On the contrary, let sin, with its evil fruits, be wiped out and abolished by repentance, and the sinner found seeking the kingdom of God anew, and forthwith in the heart of man arises joy; as in the parable, "Treasure hid in a field, which a man having found, for *joy thereof* goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth it." (S. Matt. xiii. 44.) Such joy exactly agrees, if we may so say, with the Mind of God, before Whom "there is more joy in the return of one penitent, than in ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance;" or, as our Lord Himself says, in John xv. 11, more directly alluding to His Communion with His Members, "I have spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." It is said, "Where our treasure is, there will our heart be also." Our treasure, then, being the things of God, we shall have no heart for aught else. We shall not, like Gallio, care "for none of these things," *i.e.*, be lukewarm, or indifferent. We shall not, like Martha, be cum-

bered about much serving in the things of the world; but there will be a holy and a burning zeal within us for the things which peculiarly affect God and His Kingdom, and that alone; like the Boanerges, who were full of burning ardor to vindicate the honor of their Lord; or like our blessed Lord Himself, who took a scourge of small cords and drove the "buyers and sellers out of the Temple." We shall be ever thinking of God—wanting things for Him, scheming things for Him, adapting things for Him. We shall shape everything to His glory, turn everything towards *Him*. His Image and superscription will be engraven on all we see. It will be for Him, and Him only, that "we live, and move, and have our being."

III. Thirdly, Communion with God will convey to us Oneness of *Life*. God the Father, the First Person in the Ever-blessed Trinity, we have never seen. "No man hath seen God at any time;" but God the Son, that we might not be without a visible pattern how to live, came among us, and took human flesh for our example, and abode with us even unto death. Communion with God will impart to us the power of living as Christ lived. And herein enters the question of good works. It is a truth which we must never forget, that we can no more do good works without God, than we can have faith without God. We must just as much have the Spirit to work with us when we have the *will*, as we must have the Spirit to give us the

will. It is asserted by some, that when the necessity of good works is demanded, then the doctrine of justification by faith is foregone; but it is not so. If, when we say that good works are necessary to salvation, we were to say also, that we can do good works of our own strength and power—then, indeed, there would be a total loss of justification by faith; but when we say that good works are the fruits of the Spirit—that there can not be good works acceptable to God, done by any who is destitute of the Spirit; when we say that communion with God of necessity develops itself, and makes itself visible by good works—then, surely, the two doctrines are quite compatible with each other.

I understand (as through these sermons explained) that communion with God does not take place at God's calling man; but when the call has been responded to by an act of obedience on the part of man, in our case at holy baptism, *i. e.*, in the words of our text, when we "open the door." *Then HE ENTERS IN.* With Him, when He enters, He brings in His gifts. These gifts will make our life as His was—will set before us not only the good works to do, but also the power to do them. Does this doctrine take away from the grace of God, or say that we are not justified by faith? It merely says, as the Article says, that a true faith is necessarily known by good works, as a tree by its fruits.

But what was the life of Christ? One of extreme *purity*. Communion with Him will impart to us the

same purity; involving extreme humility, gentleness, patience, meekness, self-denial, godliness, long-suffering, benevolence, beneficence. Communion with Him will impart to us all these virtues; let us consider, however, and remember, that it is not these virtues that bring us to communion with Christ; but it is the communion with Christ that brings us to these virtues. They are the result, not the cause, of our communion. They are things given us of God, because we are in a certain position of obedience as being in His covenant. They are not things which we offer to God as a right and title to the communion of His glory. Herein lies the difference. S. Paul makes it clear. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

And this sums up the whole. The *mind* in its impulses, its objects, and its interests; the *life* in its thoughts and actions—the whole character breathing of God, and fashioned after His model. This is the result of a communion with God.

All is contemplated as attainable by the Christian—all is contemplated as ready to be imparted to those who seek God, as God seeks them. Observe in what high colors the language of Scripture is clothed, when it describes the Christian state in this intercourse with God: "The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. viii. 16.) And

again, while describing the impossibility of the natural man discerning or understanding what the joys of the righteous are, the Apostle says, "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." (1 Cor. ii. 10.) Again, "Glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. vi. 20.) And again, which seems to sum up all in one most comprehensive word, "To know the love of Christ which passeth all knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the FULNESS OF GOD." These, certainly, are expressions conveying very high meaning—to be filled with the Fulness of God—to have "His Spirit bearing witness with our spirit"—to have our body and our spirit called God's, because our body is the temple in which the Spirit dwells—these are indeed expressions pregnant with high and transcendent meaning. But it is equally so if we take the converse, and see how union with the adversary of God deprives us, of necessity, of union with God Himself—the nature of the two beings so diverging, that holding to the one simultaneously involves parting from the other. For instance, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? *for ye are the temple of the Living*

God." (2 Cor. vi. 14.) And equally so, if you take the expressions which speak of our future state, as carrying on this communion hereafter: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be *like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is." Or if you take the expressions which imply holiness on our part, as of necessity arising from communion with Him—as, "Every one that hath this hope, purifieth himself as He is pure;" "Whosoever abideth *in Him* sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him;" "He that doeth righteousness, is righteous even as He is righteous,"—all these expressions, take them which ever way you will, bear upon Him, *i.e.*, upon Christ, or upon God; all have Him for their common centre, as though everything glorious, everything pure, everything righteous, came of Him, and through Him, and was in Him; and though as without Him was not anything good that is good.

Such, my brethren, is the notion we may form of the blessings and the privileges of our communion with God—the result promised to us, as the fruits of our opening the door, and receiving Him when He knocks. But are these things ever realized? Do we ever see such high notions as these of the perfection of Christianity realized among us? If we do not, that does not hinder but that God has promised them; and, should we not reach them, it is

because we, on our part, do not open the door wide enough to receive what He has to give. "Yea, let God be true and every man a liar." I repeat, we do not "open the door" *wide enough*—we do not listen and obey in what He directs us *sufficiently*, and so is there a short-coming in the fruits of our communion. For instance, take that one great practical act of our obedience—that one great act of dedicating ourselves to God—of placing ourselves in a position whereby a communion with God may be maintained in us—I mean the Holy Eucharist—how do we, as a Church, and as a people, use this means of grace?

As a Church. Where is the offering of the Sacrifice in any manner, or in any degree, made to the Lord God, as from the exceeding precious promises attached to it we might expect? In very few instances, indeed, is the mere doctrine of the Sacrifice retained. In a very scanty measure is the holy Oblation offered *as such*. How can we say, as a Church, that the doctrine of the Atonement, and the washing away of sin, by the meritorious Death and Passion of Christ, can, in its full degree, be realized, when Altar after Altar in our Churches lies bare and unused from month to month? Other Churches, as of Rome, and of the East, offer the sacrifice *daily*, because the atonement for man's sin they know is there alone to be found; and they offer it *as a sacrifice*; as, in fact, sacrificially recording the very Sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and pleading

therein the passage of that communion from God to man, and man to God, by which alone they live. But we, alas, brethren, have lost the idea of this sacrificial pleading well nigh altogether. The Church does not go up to God. The Priest does not use his sacerdotal office. We seem to deny, practically, that we have the power, as a Church, of seeking the communion of His grace.

As a people. Omitting all consideration of the sacrifice, and looking only to the people's part in this great act of communicating in Christ's Body and Blood, receiving: if it be the case with us that this great act of opening the door when God has knocked is never resorted to, or is seldom resorted to—if *once* a-year, *THREE* times a-year, *SIX* times, or the like—if we are scanty, and stint ourselves in opening this door for God, can we expect a full measure of God's grace towards us? It is because we do not communicate with God that we find God not communicating with us. Observe how, in the office of the Holy Communion, expressions such as these continually occur:—"We spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood. We are one with Him, and He with us." Agreeing with S. John vi.—"Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." Let me repeat, that if we do not realise (as, at the present day, as a Church and a people we certainly do not)—if we do not realise the fulness of our communion, so that He may be described, as

in our text, "coming in and supping with us, and we with Him," it is purely and simply our own fault. God has done His part, in standing at the door and knocking—it is we that fail in our part in opening the door, either not at all, or *sparingly*; with timid, hesitating, and reluctant hands; with hands looking one way and hearts another; with no fulness of faith; not throwing ourselves thoroughly into the mercies of God—calculating in the costs of our sacrifice, cold in the zeal of our obedience.

Some of us cry out that religion consists in the *feelings*—in the tumultuous excitements of the *passions*—and so they go on, exciting and stirring up themselves to rapturous expressions, and enthusiastic extravagances; while others dwindle away religion into cold metaphysical reasoning, and think nothing can be sound or true but that which is brought down to the level of their own feeble understandings. The one class looks upon the Church's means of grace, particularly the Holy Sacraments, as unworthy of the conveyance of that with which they are said to be charged, as though outward ordinances were unworthy of God; they have means of grace, as they think, *above* the Sacraments, in *themselves*, and need not formal channels or outward ceremonial rites. The other looks upon the Holy Sacraments as good indeed, in being moral remembrancers, but never conceives of them as instruments of grace. These two classes, then, for-

sake the Sacramental system; or they apply to it wrongly. They act upon a principle of DISOBEDIENCE. They present a frightful picture to God of the stubbornness of man's heart—not doing His will, nor receiving Him when He comes. The question for them is, not whether such a means is a worthy means, or an adequate means, or an intelligible means of doing what it purports to do, but simply whether it is God's will. If it be ascertained to be God's will, that the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist should be used as a means of grace—if they believe the Scriptures—if they believe the Church—if they believe what all Christians have ever believed at all times, and in every *place*—then, seeing it to be *God's will*, their opinion about it should surely give way to God's will about it. If they persist in charging with little what God has charged with much—if they will have an opinion that there is not that in the Sacraments which God says there is; if God says, do a certain thing and I will advance you towards salvation, and then that certain thing is not done, can they be surprised that they are not advanced towards salvation? Therein lies a disobedient spirit—and a disobedient spirit God will not away with.

My brethren, let us give good heed; the process is plain; the end is evident. There is no height of perfection in spiritual glory to which we may not attain, *if we open that door which God invites us to open.*

If we fail in attaining the highest place of Communion in *this* world, we certainly shall succeed in the next. Certainly we shall see God at *that* Day face to face, and know Him as He knows us. "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

SERMON IV.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE IN THE THINGS OF GOD.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, IN THE EASTER SEASON, 1850.)

1 S. PETER ii. 21.

“Leaving us an Example that we should follow His Steps.”

THERE is this difference between an example and a precept—that the precept merely informs us of what our duty is, the example demonstrates to us that the performance of that duty is *possible*. The precept comes with an air of authority, and demands the assent of our understanding; the example lays aside all the roughness of authority, and takes (along with the understanding) the affections and heart.

The one works rather by dictation, the other by persuasion; the one more boldly and openly, yet with a degree of sternness which somewhat repels; the other, more silently and unperceived, yet with an assurance which ultimately wins. For this reason it is, that history and biography are more pleasant studies, as well as more tending to

form the character, than moral essays, which merely define what duty is, and there leave it; for, let the understanding be ever so deeply involved in the metaphysical subtleties and nice distinctions to which the abstract principles of virtue will lead us, it is quite possible that, with a cordial agreement in the general conclusions that are drawn, there shall be no sympathy in the practical working of those conclusions—because the *heart* is left untouched. Whereas, in following the history of human greatness or human infirmity, in reading the life of some man conspicuous for sanctity or for sin, though we may never stop one instant to exercise the mind by any deductions of reason in what we read, still the actions described—either vices which fill the mind with abhorrence, or virtues which excite it to admiration—bring home to our understanding, with tenfold more precision, the very conclusions which before we might have laboured at in vain.

And moreover, in the case of those eminent for good, not only is conviction wrought in the understanding, but there is also a certain sympathy in the imagination, a desire of imitation, a longing to start forth and do the like ourselves, which proceeds no less strongly because the source of it is unfelt, and no less securely because we imagine that our following is the unbiassed and uninvited impulse of our own suggestion.

Nor would I confine these observations to the

things of the world: I would take them, with perfect conviction of their truth, into the Gospel of our Blessed Lord—and, however beautiful, however convincing, however impossible to deny the precepts of our Blessed Redeemer undoubtedly are, yet I should confidently say, that they do not bear in any man's religion that fulness and completion of effect which is borne by the *Example of His Life*.

You will observe, in the teaching of Christ, how very little was done by direct precept; it was almost all done by example. We have, indeed, in a conspicuous place of S. Matthew's Gospel, the Sermon on the Mount, and some directions to the Apostles; but, further than this, very little was done by direct precept. Parables are our Lord's favorite mode of conveying instruction; but parables are only examples—examples real or imaginary. And sometimes there are conversations arising out of the accidental circumstances in which He was placed. But conversation, again, partakes of the nature of example; for we learn by the conversation of a man what is the feeling of his heart, and the habit of his mind within—and so it is, in some sort, an *example*.

How remarkable it is, when our Lord is asked a question of moral duty, that He very seldom makes a direct reply. He imagines a case, as in the history of the good Samaritan—or He suggests an illustration, as in the one evil spirit going out, with

seven others returning; or He sets before us some great principle, and leaves us to apply it—as in the celebrated answer, “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and to God the things which be God’s.”

Our Lord seems cautiously to avoid all formal and systematic rules, all codes of law, all ethical niceties. He leaves His wishes to be inferred in the spirit, either by His own actions of real life, or by the illustration of supposed actions in others. If we may so say, He *acts* His religion—He *does* it in our very presence. On one occasion He proclaims this as the key to all He did and said—it is very remarkable, as the mould of His whole life: He took water, poured it into a basin, and washed His disciples’ feet, and then He said, “Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master and Lord, for so I am. If I, then, your Master and Lord, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers’ feet; for I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE, *that ye should do as I have done to you.*”

Let us pursue, then, this thought in the life of our Blessed Lord. For it seems that He was both born and lived—both lived and died, “*leaving us an Example that we should follow His steps.*” He was born—for unless so born of a woman as He was, He would have been only God, and then no example; He lived—that is, went about among us; was of us, in like nature with us; without sin, indeed, but still subject to our temptations, wants,

and infirmities; and, unless He had so lived, our idea of the Incarnation had been a mere dream. And He died; and unless He had so died, His very birth and life had not been a reality, and so no object of belief; and, with no object of belief, no example; but in all He was perfect as man—perfect as in the flesh—perfect in action—perfect in suffering; therefore in all things capable of imitation. Let us pursue it; first, in regard of the things of God; second, in regard of the things of man.

I. In regard of the things of God. The first thing which stands out conspicuous in our Lord's Life is this: His very minute and scrupulous attention to the laws and rules of His Church. He was, remember, a descendant of Abraham, the Son of David. As such, by Abraham's covenant, He was, by Moses's law, bound to worship God after the manner of His people. He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. He exemplified this fulfilment throughout. On the eighth day, circumcised—at forty days old, presented in the Temple with His Virgin Mother—at twelve years old, sitting among the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. All along His life, from the beginning to the last Paschal Feast of His sufferings, coming up to Jerusalem to observe with punctuality the great Church festivals; not only the Passover, which was chief of all, but the Feast of Tabernacles; and that which was only of human institution, and not of the law, the Feast of Dedication. In regard to

public offices of worship, He was ever in the Synagogue, on the Sabbath-day, taking His turn to read and expound the Scriptures, for it was "His custom." At His entrance on the public ministrations of His divine mission, He was publicly baptized, that it might be notified to men Who He really was; and therein He said, although needing no such testimony, that He "fulfilled all righteousness."

In all this—and not so much the specific acts, as the general spirit, the accidental internal testimony which all His life bore—you observe how much importance is thrown upon a minute and punctual observance of religious ordinances. Our Blessed Redeemer had Himself no need to submit to those outward things, which might have been justly cast aside as burdensome to such an one as He was. He had no need to share in verbal expressions of devotion, Who was Himself the object of prayer. He that was pure in every thought, and hallowed in every secret recess of the imagination—Whose flesh no earthly taint of impurity could for a moment vitiate—had no need, in reality, to be circumcised, as an external sign of His covenant with God. He that was Lord of the Temple Himself, and whose Presence *conferred* rather than *received* honor, had no need to be presented, with His virgin mother, as dedicated to God. He that never needed the washing of water to make Him clean, or the external manifestation of the Holy Spirit to sanctify Him, had no need to be baptised of John Baptist—the

greater of the less! The Baptist himself cried out in amazement, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me;" but Jesus explained this, and all the other actions of life, in these few words of reply: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to *fulfil all righteousness.*" And why was He in the Temple praying, and in the Synagogue reading the Holy Scriptures? and why, when He healed the lepers of their sickness, did He invariably send them to pay the legal offering due by the law of Moses? and why was He found paying tribute to the service of the Temple, though exempt as God's Son? He tells you Himself; "Notwithstanding *lest we should offend them*, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money, that take and give unto them for Me and thee." This gives the key of all; in one case, "*lest we should offend them*;" in the other, "*to fulfil all righteousness*;" i.e. to conform to the legal bindings of God's law, which were placed on the spirit of religion to preserve and keep it separate and holy, and to set an example of individual superiority, bowing itself down and yielding before the larger requirements of human wants and human infirmities. No man is exempt from the customs of religion on account of any fancied personal perfection placing him above their reach. No man is authorised to do violence to the weakness of others, because in himself he may imagine the cere-

monial law is beneath the spiritual ideas of his own more pure faith. These examples show it. Our Blessed Lord is to such a man an example and a rebuke. Grant that, to *you*, legal rites are burdensome. You have the *Church* to consider as our Lord did—no offence must be given—righteousness must be fulfilled.

Further I would say—we learn the great duty of faithfulness in religious externals in these three particulars: Holy times, holy things, holy places.

In holy *times*, the feasts and fasts of the Church, when we are called upon to notice specific events, and to rejoice, or to grieve, to sing our praise of thanksgiving, or to shed forth our tears of penitence. Holy *things*, the dedication of tithes and tributes, and offerings to our God, for the service of the Church. In holy *places*, the houses of God dedicated to His worship, and set apart from temporal uses to the sole object of God's honor.

And then, complete in all these, our public prayers, and public preaching, our hymns of praise, our litanies, our intercessions, and, above all, the order and rites of the blessed Sacraments; all these are exemplified and set forth to us by the Beloved Son of God—Himself partaking in them all; Himself setting forth the pattern of godliness, in undergoing every Jewish rite, and scrupulously performing every legal ceremony.

Let, then, no mystic enthusiast disturb us, by telling us that religion is to be contained in rap-

turous feelings and internal excitements of the mind. Let them not speak to us of violent and visible emotions of the Spirit to be stirred up within us by some secret impulses, we know not whence originating, and we know not whither tending. Let them not urge us to forsake the house of God as but a form, or the Sacraments and other rites of the Church as but externals, and of no meaning. Let them not say that prayer must only be in the mind, as bursting forth extemporaneously, and needs not to be couched in the outward and composed forms of man's language; nay, for our Lord Himself in the TEMPLE worshipped; and in the Sacraments, decreed a sign; and in a prayer bid us after an especial form to say, "Our Father Which art in Heaven."

Now let it not be said, that by setting so much stress on these external things we depreciate the internal spirit of devotion, and lose the vitality of faith. Remember we are following our Blessed Lord. We are observing what He did and said. We are not devising plans of our own. Do we see Him *because* He attended to external circumstances, *therefore* lose all internal spirit of devotion? We know very well,—common sense tells us, that if we *rest* on externals our religion is valueless. Great and beautiful as are the pomp and show of outward worship—the Temple, the Altar, the Vestments, the decorated Sanctuary, the robed Priest—yet they are not the grace of God

itself, but only means and instruments of grace; they are not the seed, or germinating principle of being, but only the pod or vessel in which that seed is preserved, and that germinating principle guarded, as a means of conveying the fountain and spirit of life.

And THUS behold the character of our Lord—

1. *His trust in God.*

How could this more forcibly be declared, than in the fact, that He made so little provision for His earthly wants, that He was described as knowing not where to lay His head. 2. *His fearlessness of man, and of earthly consequences*, as seeing God ever by Him: witness the answers made before Pontius Pilate and the High Priest. 3. *His zeal for God's glory*—as when He made a scourge of small cords, and drove the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. These instances may soon give us an insight into the heavenly-mindedness of His character, and the inward faith which animated His life. But we may go deeper than this. His religious frame of mind—abstraction from the world—and entire devotion to God, are conspicuous in His habit of *private prayer and meditation*. The exclamations which burst from Him ever and anon, in cases of difficulty; His appeals to God in earnest cries and prayers, with tears of agony; His continual *reference* to God, as His Father—All these soon convince us that His MIND was always with God.

Take these three leading times of His life—the Temptation; the Agony in the garden; and His conduct on the Cross.

In the temptation, behold Him fasting forty days and forty nights, led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, alone to contend with the Enemy of souls. In His agony in Gethsemane, behold what a contest there was with Satan, in private, mental prayer. “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder; and His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” On the cross the same religious feeling is displayed: “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?” But through all His life, not only in these more remarkable scenes, but all along, as S. Matthew tells us (and it was His constant habit), “He went up into a mountain apart to pray, and when the evening was come, He was there alone.” And as S. John describes those private supplications which He offered up: “Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour; but for this cause came I into the world. Father, glorify Thy Name.” In all these circumstances—the private meditations of the heart, the struggles, the bitter contentions with evil, the deep sighings of a thoughtful spirit, the up-lifting of the soul to God-ward—in them all we find an example for the Christian. Temptation is *our* lot, as was His. Sufferings, and struggles, and wants, and miseries, and deprivations, and disappointments, come upon us as upon Him; then let us

retire to a mountain apart, and pray as He did; let us fast and keep down the body, and think, and meditate on the high things of our religion, as He did. Be not content, my brethren, that your religion should consist in outward and public demonstrations, being present with all decent punctuality, and all righteous formalness in this house of God; praying and hearing, standing up and kneeling down, speaking and being silent, as custom dictates; but carry away with you the admonitions of the public service into the private chamber. "Enter into thy closet," the closet not only of your dwelling, but the closet of your heart; there shut to the door, then take to pieces that heart, examine it, prove it, rest not satisfied with a superficial cleansing, a scraping off of the outward stains, which are visible even to your fellow-creatures; but search it thoroughly—go deep into its wretchedness—probe the wounds of your sins, even to the very quick, and be not content until the whole scene is laid honestly open before the Judge of all, Who trieth the very "hearts and reins."

Deceive not yourselves, my brethren, by professing a *public* love of God, a *public* worship of God, and that alone; you must love God in silence also—in the night-watches, in the little times and moments when you can snatch yourself away from the noise of the world; then be upon your knees, confessing, praising, adoring. Quick as the necessary business of life is despatched, be alone for some

short moments with your God. It is a good thing to get away from men sometimes; to go with John Baptist into the wilderness, and our Lord upon the mountain-top. One of the chief, perhaps the very chief reason of our now prevailing worldliness, is, that we so seldom are retired; that all our lives, from morning to night, are spent in the public duties or the public pleasures of our several stations. We cannot get an hour to ourselves, or a place to ourselves. We have no oratory, or place of prayer, set apart either in our houses or in our hearts. We never *reflect* upon the condition in which we are. We do not calculate on what is to come; we do not measure things by things, and foresee an issue. We live only for the hour, like the beast that perisheth, or the horse and mule that hath no understanding. One pleasure telleth another, and one business certifieth another, and there is no time between the relays of a quickly succeeding demand of every word and thought for the mammon which overlays with gold the mere wood, hay, and stubble of a useless, if not of a profane life, which is to burn and consume away in the wrath of God, when He shall try it as by fire. You cannot be religious in a crowd,—you must ever and anon meditate in the night-watches, and be still;—alone with God, and communing with Him, as though He were present with you, and were to you your very Father, and Ruler, and Guide. These are the moments when real strength comes to combat the

deceits of the world. Hence it is that life flows out in a determination to bear all things, and to do all things for Him. It is His Spirit which will hence be imparted to you; so that the public demands of the world's necessary care may not overwhelm the private purity of that faith by which alone your justification in righteousness shall be established.

But again: under the head of this private religion of our Lord there is one very special point on which we must needs observe; it is this—The continual reference which He seems to make to His approaching death. His mind seems ever dwelling upon the bitter hour when He should be called upon to suffer the pains and agonies of the cross. See how frequently He makes allusion to this, in His accidental conversations with His disciples all through His life. In the xvi. S. Matt. it is said, "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

At another time, when the mother of Zebedee's children came unto Him, the first thought that was in His mind was this: "Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the Baptism that I am baptized with?" Alluding, of course, to the death which awaited Him.

At another time He says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."

And again, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me; this He said signifying what death He should die."

Thus we perceive that His death, His bitter death upon the cross, His atoning sacrificial death, for the sins of the world, was ever present to His thoughts. He never forgot, that having taken upon Himself the *life* of man, it followed, as a matter of necessity, that He should suffer the *death* of man; He never lost sight of the great and terrible conclusion of the whole scene of His earthly degradations:—that He must die, or the pains of the departing spirit, the agony of the suffering body, the helpless, lifeless form, which must then be left upon the cross, for the insults and mockings of blaspheming men.

Here, then, is our example again. Look upon the fair proportions of your present bodies; contemplate the health, and spring, and beauty, which now adorns them; but look not upon them in pride, exult not in their strength, boast not in their vigor, for lo! a few short years shall pass along, and they will be the companions of the worm, and the gnawings of creeping things shall mar all their beauty.

Here we may sojourn for a short season, and bright scenes of joy may breathe their evanescent glories around us, and the hurry and turmoil of the world may cause us to think, that it is *here* our principal occupation is concerned; but *religion*, the religion of Jesus, strictly and pointedly guards us against this wretched deception, and reminds us

of the *end*. There is a cup to drink for each one of us, the bitterness of whose dregs shall only be increased a thousand-fold if we have never dwelt upon it, until it is actually and visibly put to our lips. Why is it that men come to death-beds and stand aghast with horror and alarm? Because they have never realised death as present with them in life. Why is it that they read registers of deaths, and spell through epitaphs—follow funerals, and listen to God's Word in the solemn service, "In the midst of life we are in death;" and then, after all, when their own time comes, it seems as an unwelcome and an unnotified visitor, and as though they had no right thus to be taken by surprise? It is because men walk through their lives without reflection; because they have eyes, and are blind; because they have never formed any habit within of a *thought* of death. I would urge you thus, brethren, ever to let one main subject of your religious meditations be death. Let the idea be familiar to you. Realise it. Fancy yourself to be in the act of departure. Picture to your mind yourself dying, as you have seen others die. The only way to encounter a difficulty is to well arrange your plans beforehand, so that when it comes you may be self-possessed, and clear in action. A sure way to disabuse ourselves of all the vanities, and frivolities, and silly trifles, by which too many of us are engaged, in the luxurious care which we take of our persons, in dress and finery;

and the pride we take in beauty, and birth, and rank, and fortune, is just simply this, to meditate on the END—to remember that death will extinguish it all; will make us all equal, equal in corruption, equal in the silence of the grave, whither we all are tending.

If there is not a hope in Jesus, if there is not a stedfast looking for of His appearance to change this vile body into His glorious Body, to receive us into the place whither He is gone before, to make it ready for us—if we do not contemplate now, in good time, the dreadfulfulness of that hour, when the spirit shall travel on its mysterious path, into the Presence of the Great God of mankind—how shall we meet it? But, by now remembering constantly that it is approaching, by placing within our meditations the change that shall be wrought in us, by dwelling on the terrors of its presence, by having it well fixed upon the mind *that these things are to be*—we shall, by prayer, and through faith in Jesus Christ, and by the comforts of the Holy Spirit, meet them when they come, without flinching; we shall be enabled, without alarm, to hear God's Voice, "Set thine house in order;" we shall say with resignation, nay, perhaps in cheerful gladness, "The cup which my FATHER hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it."

Such, then, are the leading characteristics of the religion of our Blessed Lord, viewed in reference to God, His Heavenly Father. The more they are

studied, the more they will impress upon you the excellency of that mind which was in Him. And let us observe, that, running all through this character—this character of zeal, ardency of love, implicitness of trust, steadfastness of the highest and most exalted devotion—there is one remarkable spirit pervading, a perfect sobriety and calmness, and equableness, in all He did. His heavenly-mindedness led Him into no extremes. There was no depression of spirits on the one side, no bursts of outrageous enthusiasm on the other. He was never formal and cold, but He was never extravagant, or stimulated into the violent heats of that feverish sort of religion which we see in some men. He was never enthusiastic, but He was always earnest. He was never violent in any expressions of anger, but he was always just in His denunciations against sin. Looking to His Heavenly Father alone, and the object of His life, and the future that stood before Him, every step He took made for that object; every breath He breathed, and every word He spoke, was the foundation of that cause which He came into the world to plead.

Let your religion, my brethren, be then such as His. "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus."

In public.—Let your services in the house of God, and your attendance at sacraments, be regular, punctual, and with all the love, and zeal, and earnestness, which becometh a disciple of such a Master. Be not as the hypocrites, praying in

the corners of streets, to be seen of MEN; but yet be in the Church with Jesus, to be seen of God. Wash not the outside of the cup and platter, with the Pharisees; but, with your Redeemer, cleanse the temple of your heart of the buyers and sellers that too often set up their merchandise therein.

In private—i. e. In your fastings, your prayers, your meditations, your confessions, your thoughts of death, walk as He walked; let your steps follow Him continually to the desert and the mountain. Let not life pass away from stage to stage, as though there were nothing to you beyond it—in mere present calculations of worldly interest or carnal gratification—but rather give yourselves to such a management and control of it, as may show that you keep in view stedfastly the end.

There are two lives set before each one of us by Almighty God: one, the life of Mammon, which ends in condemnation; the other, the life of God, which terminates in the glory of a Redeemed Soul. If you say, *how* can I attain the life of God? you are answered by the words I have spoken to-day. The life of God is in the Blessed Jesus; watch Him—follow Him—put on Him. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus.” Love your God as He loved His Heavenly Father—obey Him—fear Him—think of Him—worship Him—and prepare for your departure. When with Him, you shall see such things as now pass all your understanding.

SERMON V.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE, IN THE THINGS OF MAN.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, IN THE EASTER SEASON, 1850.)

1 S. PETER ii. 21.

“Leaving us an Example, that we should follow His Steps.”

WHEN we form a system of moral and religious conduct in reference to one another, the subject of necessity branches out in this manner.

First, there is an universal enlarged view of the human race, without reference or distinction of creed or country. We look upon *all men*—the Heathen—the Jew—the Mohammedan—all as flesh of our flesh—as made by One God, as children of One Father—and towards them all we have certain moral duties to perform.

But, then, from this enlarged or universal aspect of men, as men, we soon abstract our view, and look upon our race with reference to Religion, and then Christianity is the boundary of our view. All who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and that He has come in the flesh—no matter

whether he be Greek, Roman, or Anglican—Protestant or Sectarian—but all who believe in Christ Jesus as the Saviour of men, have a distinct claim upon certain moral sympathies and duties.

But then, no sooner have we looked upon Christians in this general aspect, than we are forced again to contract our view, and different Churches, as constituted locally, present themselves; and different countries, and different forms of government, claim from us a more narrow and closer sympathy. Hence arises a new range of conduct and feeling.

But then, again, having arrived at our own country, and looking at it, irrespective of all others,—and our own Church, containing to us the household of faith—and being to us that portion of Christ's holy Catholic Church, scattered throughout the world, to which God has called us—and considering it for the moment irrespective of all others—we are next drawn more closely and more narrowly still, in moral obligation, by a reference to our own particular parish, and neighbourhood, and congregation; and then more closely still, to our own household and our family; and thence in each of these aspects arises a totally distinct class of duties again. Parents and children—masters and servants—brother and sister—husband and wife—all these present narrower and closer ties of affection—and therefore claims of moral duty, each in their degree, for every man's consideration.

But still we have not come to the end; for, as each man, in whatsoever sphere he moves, by his own personal conduct, is an example to all others, so he has duties to perform towards himself, and IN himself, and FOR himself.

Without regarding any particular relationship, but withdrawing from all other human obligations, and concentrating the view upon his own individual character as a responsible being before God, he now beholds *himself*—his own body—his own mind—his own soul—and has to observe how far in purity, in self-denial, in holiness, in meekness of spirit, in obedience, he approaches the standard of Gospel perfection; and so how far in the Blood of Jesus, salvation may be looked upon as *his*; how far the faith of Christ may be seen to work in *himself* the end of Righteousness.

Here, then, it is manifest, there is a very wide field for meditation. I shall strive (as in the preceding sermon, from the Example of Christ, in His religion towards God, so now from the Example of Christ in His religion towards men,) to develop the different stages of these our duties one towards the other; drawing them, nearer and closer, from the enlarged and universal character of men, to that of Christians, citizens, countrymen, neighbours, families, ourselves; for our Lord is in ALL
“OUR EXAMPLE, THAT WE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS.”

Now, in regard to the more enlarged and wider

range of duties (which I before described), the principle of Christianity which is brought first into action is denominated CHARITY.

Charity, or LOVE, in its proper sense, is just that universal all-embracing sympathy, or affection, which will take in the whole human race as its object; excluding all difference of creed, of nation, of politics, of customs. And, under this feeling of *charity*, we must observe that there is embraced not only benevolence, which is good *will*, and beneficence, which is good *deeds*, but all toleration of difference of opinion—a bearing with the errors and prejudices of others—a tenderness of mind in judging of the failings of others—an unwillingness to offend—a desire to be gentle, and merciful, and forgiving—a willingness to suffer, though wrongfully, and to be spoken against, though unjustly. And in whom was this feeling more conspicuously abundant than in our Lord? He did not confine His message of love, or limit His good tidings, to those of His own country, or those of His own religion, or to those who favored Him, or spoke well of Him. His good will extended to all mankind; first, indeed, to His own countrymen, but then branching out to *all*, of every nation, and of every kind. This you will readily perceive, at the very commencement of His life. The wise men of the East, a foreign nation, were suffered to come and worship Him, and offer their gifts. (S. Matt. xii. 46.) His works of mercy were done for the

centurion's servant (a Roman), or the Syro-Phœnician woman (a heathen), as well as for the favored Israelite. You behold Him sitting down beside the well with a woman of Samaria, just as readily as talking with the Jewish doctors in the Temple. If He has to direct the wandering mind of man, you find Him equally sitting down to meat with publicans and sinners, as walking in the cornfields with His chosen Apostles. If He has to comfort the anxious and weeping penitent, you find Him as ready to receive the homage of the Magdalen, as you do to take pleasure in the family which He best loved—those of Bethany, highly favored. His *love* was thus *universal*; not confined to country, or limited to those who agreed with Him in opinion, but just as His Gospel was brought to the whole world, so was the temper of His mind ready to receive all who would receive Him.

His tenderness towards the wants of others, even amounting to a sacrifice of His own wishes, is conspicuous in His conduct towards the multitudes, in Matt. xiv. He retired to a desert place—wishing to be alone—but the multitudes followed Him; immediately that He perceived this, giving up his former intention of gratifying Himself, He went forth, healed their sick, and fed the multitudes with five loaves and two fishes.

His objection to all violence or retaliation is conspicuous in the scene of His capture by the

Jews. "One of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the High Priest, and smote off his ear." What said Jesus? Did He rejoice, or show any sympathy with this act of violence? Then said Jesus unto him, "Put up again thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." His allowance for ignorance, and want of opportunity, is conspicuous in His reply to Pilate: "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above, therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin;" implying that Pilate, in that matter, was less to blame than the Jewish high priest; for the one had the opportunity of knowing Who He was, the other—by his education and country, was only the organ of a superior power. And, lastly, His forgiveness of injuries. His perfect, free, and unconditional throwing aside of all resentment for the wrongs of His whole life, is familiar to us all, in that well-known expression: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Thus you have a view of the charity of our Blessed Lord. Men of all countries, all religions, all characters; enemies, slanderers, revilers, all come within the range of His benevolence, and His beneficence, His good-will and His good actions. He fed the multitudes, as multitudes, without asking of whom, or of what sort, those multitudes were composed. He loved all men. He never rejected *any*

until they rejected Him. He offered His material bread for the body, and His spiritual bread for the soul, to *all*. He said: Come unto Me all ye that are weary—Jew or Gentile—and I will give you rest. He fulfilled in action what S. Paul so beautifully gives as the description of charity: “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

Next, let me set before you, as another leading feature of the character of our Lord, His patriotism. You may perhaps be surprised at this,—that after just speaking of His universal feeling of philanthropy, not confined to any country, I should speak now, in juxtaposition with it, of His patriotism, that is, His love for one particular country. But you observe, I am now contracting the sphere of duty, as mentioned in the outset. From considering mankind as one universal race, we are going on to a consideration of our special duties as living under one government, subjects of one king, or natives of one country. In the former view, we spoke of what we may denominate our *human* duties, now of our *civil* duties. And we must not be misled, so as to think the one inconsistent with the other. It is to show their just compatibility with

each other, that our Lord's Example is so peculiarly beautiful. Philanthropy, *i.e.*, the love of man, does not necessarily interfere with patriotism, *i.e.*, love of our country. Having made sure of the first as the broader basis, or foundation, we contract the circle for a more intimate and federal relationship at home. In the narrower circle new views spring up before us, and closer sympathies, but none that are contradictory of those which we previously recognised. Now the love of our Blessed Lord for His country, and specially for that great city which to the Jew was ever the first and foremost object of prayer and veneration, was very conspicuous. Whatever that country or its laws demanded, He studiously performed. Tribute was demanded of Him; and though He might, as He shows Himself, on spiritual grounds have refused to pay it, yet He wrought a miracle rather than create a difference or dispute: "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish which first cometh up, and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money, that take, and give unto them for Me and thee." On this occasion the tribute was demanded for the service of the Church, and the Church's law He faithfully observed. On another occasion the question of tribute was in like manner raised for the service of the state, and He acted in like manner, studiously observing the law. "Tell us, therefore," said the Herodians, "what thinkest

thou? is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?" He saw through their craftiness, and desiring to see the tribute money, His reply was, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's."

Again, His submission to the authority of the High Priest, when adjured to say whether He was the Son of God, shows the value in which He held the government of the Church; His submission to the jurisdiction of Pontius Pilate, when arraigned before him to be crucified, shows the value in which He held the government of the state; and though He said Himself that He might have summoned more than twelve legions of angels to defend Him, He submitted without a murmur to both these authorities in their place. And not only were these submissions conspicuous, as showing the high estimation in which He held legal authority, but there was also a deep principle of love running throughout His whole career, marking where His heart and affections lay. Sometimes He could speak in just indignation against the perverters of right and honor, as in the case of the Pharisees; sometimes He would stand and contemplate the sorrows which He foresaw would soon overwhelm the whole Jewish church and people: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves." And even as God in the voice of His Prophets had said: "O My people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? O Ephraim, what shall I do

unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?" even so does Jesus apostrophise His beloved city in all the tenderest terms of the truest patriot: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

We proceed, thirdly, to lay before you, as another characteristic of our Lord, the nature of His intercourse with the world; that is to say, society, general society,—drawing the circle now still closer, from the civil duties of a citizen to the duties of social life. Now, we know that there is no one aspect in which the difficulties of moral obligation so constantly present themselves to us; as in what is called by us in general, our intercourse with the world. The world is so invariably described in Holy Scripture as hateful to God—its habits and opinions so opposed to His; its rules and maxims so contrary to what He lays down as the groundwork of His requirements in the gospel, that when we consider the absolute necessity we are under of mixing in some degree with it we are distressed, and frequently perplexed, not knowing where to turn. But let us follow our Blessed Lord; He will give us here, as in all else, a certain rule. It is remarkable, that, with all His pure and unbending notions of religion, His unflinching rebukes of vice wheresoever He found it, His stedfast adherence to every law of purity and strict integrity of action,

He did not withdraw Himself, in ascetic austerity, from the society and companionship of man. We perceived before that one of the religious duties He was most assiduous in performing was, at certain times, a withdrawal from the world to secret prayer and meditation. But hallowed communion with God, the going apart to the desert and the mountain to pray, was not incompatible in Jesus with a seasonable intermixture in the active society of mankind. Thus you find Him performing His first miracle at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee—turning water into wine; and you will find Him sitting at meat at the table of publicans and sinners—for which cause, indeed, He was continually rebuked by the Pharisees—“Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?” Contrast the manners of Jesus with those of John the Baptist. John was a Nazarite from his birth; he drank neither wine nor strong drink; his meat was locusts and wild honey, and a leathern girdle was about his loins; while S. Luke says of him, that from his earliest years he was separate from his family, living an austere and recluse life. “The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.” But Jesus was in all these things the reverse. You hear of nothing austere in regard to His apparel, in regard to His manners, in regard to the way in which He communicated with the general world; so much so, that His enemies took occasion to draw a contrast between

them: "John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and ye say he hath a devil; the Son of Man is come eating and drinking, and ye say, behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber."

At the same time, however, that we thus perceive the absence of all exclusiveness or austerity, we must not run into the danger of inferring from this a right, on our part, to an unlicensed and unlimited accommodation to the world. It is so easy to take up any question on a superficial view, and omit the whole spirit on which the question hinges, that I must guard you carefully on this dangerous point. In all you see Jesus do, trace the *motive*. Observe the course of action, and you will invariably come to the key of the whole in this—the good of those around Him, and the glory of God. Trace Him upon one particular occasion, by way of instance; where He sits down to meat with a Pharisee (S. Luke xi. 37): "And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him, and He went in and sat down to meat." Here, then, might the advocate for indiscriminate mixture with the world cry out, "Why! you see Jesus dining with the Pharisee, an unconverted and unbelieving man, one of the world! Is He not an example, and may I not then do the like? Why restrain myself from such and such places of amusement, or such and such places of worldly resort, when Jesus lays no such restraint upon Himself?" Not so; go on with the story: "And

when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner." Here, then, you see, that although Jesus did enter into the Pharisee's house to sit down to meat, He yet, on the very outset, breaks through one of His host's hypocritical customs, in order to attract his attention, and so convey a lesson of holiness: "And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness."

Why, then, did He go into this Pharisee's house? Not to gratify Himself; not out of fear of offending him; not out of desire to stand well with the great—but to teach the way of God; to make it a handle of religion; to do good; to try the opportunity of converting and bringing over this and all the other of His unbelieving countrymen to the religion of truth. And such you will invariably find to be the key of all His intercourse with man, in that general society of which we speak. Let there be society then, but let there be a Christian spirit with it. Let there be amusement, but let it not verge on even the confines of levity towards God, or indifference towards man's temporal or spiritual happiness. The prayer of Jesus for His disciples is, not that they may be taken "out of the world" (for then they could be of no advantage in reclaiming it), but only from *the evil*. While He sets you the example of the fact, let Him also set you the example of the

motive, and the *manner*, and the *extent*. While you are in the world, the multitudes surrounding you, and the voices of many blandishments crying out to you, "Fear not; join with us; there is no danger,"—do you, my brethren, like Jesus, when surrounded by such multitudes, "*thrust out a little from the land*"; that is to say, do not engender too intimate a familiarity with them. Place yourselves so that you may look on close enough to do good, and near enough to be heard; but still with no risk of being trampled under foot, or overwhelmed with the press. Mix with the world as Jesus did—for *His* reasons, and in *His* manner; with *His* depth of feeling for the good of souls; encountering every calumny, and enduring every painful sight for the welfare of others, but not for your own gratification; then no one will take you to task, for you will be in *His company*. But beware of making this confessed part of our Lord's character an excuse for the real worldliness which you have, may be, built upon it; for remember, though He did dwell with publicans and sinners—though He did suffer penitents to kneel and bathe His Feet with their tears, and wipe them with the hair of their head—though He was at a marriage feast converting water into wine, and was ever in the multitude conversing and taking part in their ways—still He has, by His Apostle, said this, in order that you might not mistake the outward action for the inward spirit: "Love not the world,

neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; for *all that is in the world*—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever.”

Such, after all, is but an imperfect sketch of the character of our Blessed Lord. Much more ought to be said in many minute details, were time allowed. But I now pass over details, in order to collect out of the whole some general points of remark and guarding for ourselves. One thing is very conspicuous—the Unity of Spirit, the identity, the harmony which breathes throughout; excluding from every virtue the evil of its extreme, and preserving in each the just balance of consistency. If there had been a failing in any one particular, that failing would not have been made up by an over quantity of perfections (if we may so speak) in another. For instance; if our Blessed Lord had been ever so distinguished by the philanthropy of His character, had been all charity, and liberal and generous feelings towards man in the abstract, and yet, when we looked at Him as a citizen, we had found Him towards His government, or towards His church, or towards constituted authorities of any sort, rebellious, captious, a despiser of dignities, unwilling to give tribute where tribute was due, and honor where honor was due, and submission of His own opinion where

submission was due,—then of what avail would all the beauty of His philanthropy have been, when it carried Him not on far enough to see that he who disturbs the common weal of society by unjust, ambitious, or wicked devices, is courting popular applause or selfish interests, cannot but tend to the general unhappiness of the community? A generous and loving disposition towards all mankind ceases either to be amiable or beneficial, when it neglects the duties which any immediate sphere of life calls upon it to perform; and no violation of peace, harmony, or order, in local responsibilities, can be atoned for by the highest claims of a general or universal intention to do good. We must work upwards from little to great, from positive duties well performed to abstract theories of universal blessing, leaving the development of the grander operations of our charity to such times as God may think fit to call them into being.

On the other hand, if our Blessed Lord had been ever so good a citizen, ever so stern an upholder of the laws, ever so uncompromising an advocate for the honors and dignities of the powers that be as ordained of God; but if, at the same time, He could carry His views no farther than this, looked not out upon the broad world of human beings which are beyond, had no word of comfort for the Samaritan because he was beyond the reach of His privileges, no word of mercy for the suffering Heathen because he was beyond the ken of His immediate vision, no

generous and liberal affection towards the souls of the whole human race as joint creatures under one Creator,—then what should we have said of the capacity of that affection which limited itself by such illiberal narrowness, and shut itself up within the time, and space, and customs of a single nation?

If, again, we had placed the two together, and found His charity abounding, and also His civil duties, as far as the law's compulsion went, exactly performed; and yet, withal, had found Him so exclusive by the superior sanctity of His life, and so austere in the communications and intercourse which He held with His immediate neighbours, that there was altogether a desire appearing to repel the approaches of men, and to have no dealings with those less holy and less perfect than Himself; what should we have said of the charity which bade Him love the distant and the unknown, and yet forbid Him to mix with the crowds which thronged around His door?

But you observe, that none of these suppositions can for an instant hold. There was a unity in THE WHOLE, which proves the sincerity of each *individual part*; and so, my brethren, be assured in your own case, that Christianity expects of you, after the Example of Jesus, to have a confiding, consistent, and uniform spirit of love breathing through your character. In vain will you speak of the distant and the ideal, if you have not the particular and the present. If you hear a man speak loud, vaunting

words of his philanthropy, and shed copious flowing tears for the misery of heathen and distant countries—and yet have no compunction in passing by the ignorance, and the wretchedness, and the poverty which is within a stone's throw of his own dwelling; be assured that man's philanthropy is not of the right Christian character, for there is no consistency or unity in it. Or if you see a man with all the external appearances of righteousness, and with all the phraseology of religion, withdrawing himself into a narrow and secluded circle, jealously guarding himself against the intrusion of any of a different caste—shuddering to encounter the looks of men of uncongenial sentiments, or the society of those not so strictly abstinent, or so apparently holy, as himself—be assured there is a failure somewhere in the Christianity of that man. He is either proud of his self-righteousness—"God, I thank thee I am not as other men are;" or he is hypocritically pretending to that which he is not; or he is deficient in that real substantial love for his fellow-creatures which would lead him to "bear all things, hope all things, but judge no man."

Our great danger in the present day arises from the adoption of some well-recognised and acknowledged duty, to the loss of its harmony with other duties, and its adjustment by counterbalancing principles of action. We take up the great leading idea of Love; and, under the name of Charity, we hold out the right hand of fellowship to the enemies of

God. How does that which is essentially good bring us to a result which is essentially vicious? It is because we fasten on one side of the great duty—which, by being only one side, is untrue—to the exclusion of the other, which was needed to give the required equipoise. Charity is required to tolerate all difference of opinion. This toleration, coupled with Charity, receives the name of Liberality. Liberality brings in the necessity of not being over-scrupulous in differences of opinion, and creates what is called Latitudinarianism. Latitudinarianism—looking out upon the differences of creed, opinion, and custom which prevail throughout the world, and embracing all with an equal cordiality—becomes in time so weakened by its expansion, that it believes with reluctance any thing of its own as peculiar, and, receiving all, receives nothing. It becomes therefore, careless of truth, supine, indifferent, dead. Then arises Apathy; what is called in S. John's description of the Church of Laodicea, *Lukewarmness*. This Lukewarmness, caring for all things a little and for nothing much, by a fusion of all that is valuable as specific into an heterogeneous mass of what is useless when combined, (because the combination attempts to join contraries,) produces such a distraction of order, method, and arrangement in the mind, that Scepticism is the natural result. From Scepticism springs Infidelity; from Infidelity, a denial of God.

Such is the continual downward course of what

are called Liberal principles; and it accounts for the phenomena which we are now daily called upon to witness—of men, otherwise of exalted minds, who deny Christ and the Church, and whose faith, if it were closely pressed, would be found to amount to very little more than an historical assent to the Life of our Blessed Lord. It accounts for what we see in the governments of the day in Church and State: principles and practices which entirely set at nought all idea of a Body of Christ with members in particular—all idea of a creed dogmatically set forth in articles of faith—all idea of the necessity of separation and cutting off from the Body what is unsound by reason of denial of such articles of faith. It accounts for the general state of political as well as ecclesiastical parties in this country, which are so fusing themselves into a general commixture of all opinions and all creeds, that identification is lost, and we seldom find any who has a definite idea of either what he believes, or what he has it in his mind to do. It all arises, we may cheerfully allow, from *Charity*, in the origin and fountain of its being; but it has deviated into the absurdity and the sin of its present complexion, by substituting, for the real Love of the Gospel (*αγαπη*), the spurious modern token of Latitudinarianism. The Latitudinarian imagines that he is charitable: he is, in reality, the most illiberal and the most selfish of bigots.

The same danger arises, and we arrive at the

same result from the very opposite side: namely, from that, in itself, laudable quality of patriotism and nationality of character which is so peculiarly ours. Only, that in the one case we pursue Charity or Love into a more enlarged and expanded space than it will bear; in the other, we contract it and press it downwards into one too narrow for its life. It is good for us to love our country, to love our national Church, to be fond of its customs, to adhere to its doctrines, to imagine it everything that is right and good. This nationality of religion is in itself not only not a harmless, but it is a good emotion of the mind, as it was in our Blessed Lord; but why cannot it be cherished safely and securely, without the necessity of impugning the doctrines, or abusing the customs of other churches which differ from our own? We begin with love of our hearths, love of our altars, love of our own domestic ways, and congregational customs. Then we hear of others who differ, and who have, let it be remembered, the same love for their peculiarities as we for ours; we hear of men worshipping in a way different from ourselves, and immediately pronounce them wrong, not because of the thing abstractedly judged, or considered, but because of the difference. We cannot bear that there shall be this difference—it seems to us an injury to God that it should exist; we therefore go forth and destroy it; we feel ourselves called upon, in the energy of our own opinions and convictions, to make all mankind as

happy as ourselves. We are so happy, so right, so satisfied with all we do, that our ways, creeds, practices, must be the right ways, creeds, and practices, and there can be no other such. We must needs go forth, then, and make all men like ourselves. If they will not be persuaded, they must be compelled. If they will not be won, they must be destroyed. So we begin to charge, impute motives, vilify, malign (all things are lawful for the end), nay, we go on, and the scaffold puts one opponent out of the way of opposition, and the stake another, and, like the Jewish nation of old, we feel ourselves impelled, by a kind of enthusiasm of the Lord, to destroy and devastate countries and people by the fire and by the sword, that we may win them to the unity of the Cross of our great and living Saviour, and force them into the peace of our own salvation. Oh! strange, wicked perversity of man! How strange! the sincerest love ending in the bitterest hatred! Just as on the other side the liberal ended in the bigot, by reason of expanding the charity with which he began; so, on this side, the patriot ends in the bigot, by reason of contracting and narrowing it. It is the same end of absurdity and sin, and always will be, when we suffer any one-sided view of God and His laws to take up their abode within us. Even a virtue has need of equipoise, adjustment, and balancing, or it degenerates into a vice.

Unity of spirit throughout the whole life is what

we have to seek for; not one point pressed unduly, nor one portion of it advanced too far; but like an army, whose strength consists neither in the right wing of itself, nor of the left, nor of the centre, but of the whole combined in one advancing movement. Suffer the enemy to take you in any one part without the other, and your strength is destroyed; but present the whole simultaneously and equally before him, and you prevail.

SERMON VI.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE IN THE THINGS OF MAN.

(OMITTED IN THE COURSE OF 1850, BUT PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S IN THE
EASTER SEASON, 1844.)

1 S. PETER II. 21.

"Leaving us an Example that we should follow His Steps."

IN the two former sermons I endeavored to set forth the principles of our Blessed Saviour's character, in regard to the general spirit of charity and philanthropy which in Him was so remarkable, and I endeavored to adduce rules for our conduct in life (as from His Example) in regard of our being men and citizens.

But now (drawing the circle closer) I shall endeavor, in the same manner, to see what principles and rules of action we can glean for those relationships which are nearer home. If our Lord is "*our Example that we should follow His Steps*," there cannot of course be any situation of life in which that example will not hold. We may look for guidance in Him everywhere. In no case or

circumstance of life can we be cast, but He will be before us; exemplifying, either actually or by inference, what our conduct ought to be.

Next then, to our duty towards each other as general citizens and brethren, would be ranged the peculiar duties of our calling or profession.

Men are distinguished from one another in the world by professions and ranks. Professional duties then, and duties arising from this division and allotment of ranks, will be the next object of our enquiry. And if we can find that our Lord, in His human capacity, assumed any such professional duties—if He constituted Himself as of any rank or degree among the children of men—whatever was the temper of His mind in performing the offices of that rank or degree, such ought to be the temper of our mind in all cases analogous to it, and in proportion.

But our Lord DID assume an office or profession. He became specially a preacher of religion: He was at the head of apostles and disciples: He was a Master, a Teacher, a Prophet, One having authority. Others followed Him, inferior to Him, to learn of Him, and He was at their head.

It is of course evident that His Example in this public profession as a Teacher of religion is, in the first instance, applicable to the special ministers of God solemnly set apart for the sacred service of the sanctuary. We are told "to feed the flock of God which is among us, taking the oversight

thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but *being examples to the flock*," i.e. We, the ministers of God, are to be examples to the flock, having Him, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Chief, and Shepherd, and Bishop, of our souls, as *our* example. His method of teaching as a Prophet, rightly dividing the word of God; His method of ruling and governing those who were set under Him; His method of cherishing penitent souls, winning the careless, subduing the obstinate, and comforting the distressed; His method in all these ministerial functions, and others such, must of course be closely studied and weighed by every one who presumes to present himself before the Lord, to receive the gift of the ministry by laying on of hands. But we have no need now to speak of this, it is rather our work at present to speak of the great mass of Christian souls, on whose hearts and minds the pastoral teaching has to bear. It is the peculiar feature of the Gospel dispensation, that even the laity are, in a sense and peculiar way, "priests and kings." So high does the Church set them, so great their privileges, as compared with the privileges of the Lord, that we are all said to be as one, a "chosen generation," a "royal priesthood." As a Church, or body of Christ, we pray that "God's kingdom may come;" and so, in accordance with, and furtherance of, the prayer, we are bound, each in our several spheres and capacities, to pro-

pagate and extend that kingdom; and though all are not actually ordained to the service of the sanctuary, either in offering sacrifice, or in preaching the word, still, in their respective offices of presiding over others in any way whatsoever, all have in some way Christ for their example, in His ministerial capacity. For instance, parents set over children, kings set over subjects, magistrates and judges set over the law, landlords set over tenants, masters set over servants and apprentices: all these are what Christ calls "*cities set upon a hill,*" "*the salt of the earth.*" They are such ministerial ranks and professions in life as may justly call for some leading principles of guidance, by which the spirit of Christianity shall be developed for the good of souls set under them.

In this view let us now consider our Lord's character. As a minister, how did He minister? As a teacher, how did He teach? As a guide, how did He lead?

The first thing which I would point out to your notice, would be this: His very great tenderness and gentleness in His dealings with those over whom He was placed.

How different was Christ's teaching from the stern rigor and exactitude of the law! The law comes with precepts of specific demand, and with penalties of alarm and rigor. The prophets come with vengeance and punishment as the burden of their cry—perfect obedience or con-

demnation for ever—no escape for the slightest deviation. Great blessings and rewards, indeed, for the obedient and the successful; but the points of obedience and success so far beyond human reach, that hope sinks back into despair, clogged with the thousand incumbrances of our miserable nature. In Mount Sinai, the schoolmaster, which is the law, rules with a force so minute and so terrible, that we would rather pass it by altogether, scared by the multiplicity of its demands. But there is no thunder and lightning, and terribleness of power, when Christ comes either to teach or to rule. The Mount of the Gospel on which our Blessed Lord first preached His Sermon to the people is the very opposite of the Mount of Sinai. The very first words begin with blessing: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God;" and the whole tenor, and voice, and spirit of the Teacher shine forth as those of a Pastor gathering in lambs into a fold, rather than of a Lawgiver pronouncing stern sentences for the guiding of an unruly multitude.

The same principle is visible in the system which our Lord so remarkably developed in teaching by Parables. This system had indeed long before been used by the prophets occasionally, and more particularly in parables of action; but it had never formed a continuous method of teaching, till our Lord Himself brought it into notice. For He was expressly asked, why He

so taught the people by parables? as though His method of using them had something in it remarkable. And why? It was for tenderness sake—for love—in anxiety not to make too direct and explicit statements of doctrine, or of rebuke, which might have repelled many unused to the things which He had to lay before them. By parables, they seeing not otherwise, would see—they hearing not otherwise, would hear—and understanding not otherwise, would understand; because, it is said, of the hardness of their hearts. By parables He would make His way to their hearts, otherwise gross, imperceptibly. He would bring out to their view novelties which might have startled them by any bold and explicit statement, just as light too suddenly introduced before the sight blinds instead of illuminating. He would soften harsh things, to escape from their prejudices; and, by illustrations and shadows of resemblance, would paint their own cases of sin so peculiarly, that the application would not be felt till the judgment had come from their own lips. It was then this tenderness of teaching that so peculiarly marked the system of His parables; and the same spirit is equally conspicuous in the common conversations of our Lord. With the greatest of sinners, and the most obnoxious to the punishments of the law, how tenderly does our Lord deal, as with one still to be saved—still to be loved—fulfilling His own words of going into the mountains to search for the one

lost sheep, then bringing it home on His shoulders rejoicing. You will observe this in the case of the woman taken in adultery. There was none of the fierceness of indignation which the Jews expected to see—none of the personal anger which such a crime might have been expected to excite; but He bent down His Face as though He were writing upon the sand, and said, “Neither do I condemn thee—go and sin no more.”

So in His conversation with another sinner, the woman of Samaria. The tenderness and the skill with which He managed the conversation is very remarkable. She was a sinner. He knew it. He desired her conversion. He desired to make known to her, and to her countrymen by her means, the way of salvation. When she came to draw water at the well, He did not burst forth with any direct accusation of the sin which stained her; He did not overwhelm her with any direct announcement of the danger in which she stood; if He had, she probably would have been alarmed, and would have put an end to the conversation by an immediate flight; but see how judiciously, how tenderly, how quietly He brought the thing about. He began a casual remark about drinking the water. The woman naturally took part in it. He then says, “if thou knewest the gift of God, and *Who* it was that saith to thee, give Me to drink.” How gentle the suggestion. If you did but know Who I am, how differently would you address Me.

This excites her curiosity. He then advances a little further:—"Go, call thy husband, and come hither." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Now the point was gained, and He then pursues His teaching at full. "Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband." The result of it all was, that many of the Samaritans believed on Him.

And as His teaching was thus gentle, so it was always gradual—here a little, there a little, line upon line. He did not carry the minds of His disciples at once, and abruptly, into all the high mysteries of His Gospel. His first teaching, as we see in the Sermon on the Mount, was practical. He spoke to "the poor in spirit, the mourners, the hungry and thirsting after righteousness." He guarded against hypocrisy in alms, in prayer, in fasting: He spoke of good works. Then, having once established these practical parts, He went forward to the announcement of His doctrine—regeneration, the atonement, the resurrection, the judgment—the glories of the righteous, the punishments of the wicked; and all this was done so gradually, hinted very slightly at first, and never fully developed until the period of His final departure from the world. And as you have the tenderness and the gradual steps of His teaching, so you have the nicety and adaptation by which He called to aid all the surrounding circumstances of

the place and the time where He happened to be. If walking in the corn-fields, He alludes to the harvest, and compares the gathering in of the corn to the gathering in of the righteous at the day of judgment, while the tares are left to burn. If in the vineyard, He calls Himself the Vine, and His disciples the branches. If He is told of His mother and brethren standing without, desiring to see Him, He takes up the point immediately—"My mother and my brethren are those which hear the word of God, and do it." Standing in the temple, and contemplating the destruction which was soon to be brought upon it, He compares Himself to the temple, and says, "Destroy *this* temple, and I will raise it up in three days," teaching the doctrine of the resurrection. Again, in the outer courts, the sheep were kept ready for sacrifice, and there was a gate, and the porter stood at the gate. He directs their attention to it, and calls Himself the Shepherd, and the Porter, and the Gate, all metaphors taken from what they saw around them.

Again, happening to be there early in the morning, at the time when they were preparing the sacred lamps for service, He takes up the idea, and says, "I am the light of the world. He that followeth Me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

And so I might go on for any length of time in setting before you this very peculiar feature of our

Lord's teaching. By the sea-side, with the nets; with the little ships cast out into the sea: in the corn fields—by the road side—in the city—in the temple—all scenes and places, whatsoever they were, turned into a prolific source of such beautiful teaching, as drew forth, on so many occasions, the remarks of the bystanders: "Never man spake like this Man." The Teacher ever stood before them as one of the tenderest in love, the most compassionate in pity, the most wise in counsel, and yet, withal, He taught as "one having authority, and not as the scribes." So, then, let our ministration of any office of superiority, in leading or in guiding others, be founded on this example of our Lord. Whatever talent, in our several spheres, God may intrust to our keeping, let it be used in the same spirit as we see here depicted; let it be used in gentleness—in gradual advancement towards the end in view—in tenderness towards the infirmities of others—in no tyrannical exercise of power—in no display of self, as an object of admiration, or of vain glory; no love of excitement, or attempt at notoriety—but silently, and calmly, and uniformly, working out the will of God; considering ourselves as only in Him endued with the talent which we have, and to Him accountable for its use; looking to His interests, not our own—masters not of our own property, but stewards of His. If a master of servants, let us preside as over souls for which we shall be accountable, by the influence either of good

or bad example, which we give them in our lives and conversation. If fathers of families, let us bear in mind that to each olive branch which is permitted to sit around our tables, God will look in the internal spirit of their minds for the instruction of righteousness and faith which, under Him and in His Church, we may have given them. If magistrates, the just administration of law in mercy, and not in wrath, will be looked for at the great day, when judges shall be tried, and become as their own prisoners of the lowest place. If landlords, the voices of the poor and labouring men of low degree will be calling for vengeance, unless, while we have had the time, we have gone about doing good, and spared them in their necessities. Yes, in all such places of trust God will look for our imitation of the Great Example. Have we taught, admonished, gently led? Have we been compassionate, pitiful, courteous? When we have had the opportunity of correcting the wrong, or leading on to the right, have we used it? When we have seen sinners in the midst of sin, have we remonstrated and gently won them back? When we have seen the weak and timid distrustful, and beginning to lose faith, have we gone up and encouraged them? When we have seen the diseased and sick in soul, have we hastened to bind up their wounds, and mollified them with ointment? And, specially, in that one great general work of Christ—the education of the Poor—have we gone into

the lanes and streets of the city, and fetched out from thence the lame, and the halt, and the blind? Have we set before them the light of the Church, and the Word of God? Have we attempted in any way to save them, in this untoward generation, from the depth of sin into which the heathen masses of our great towns are plunged? Have we built churches—furnished priests—set up the banners of the faith in places where it has never been known; or, where it is known, and well nigh ready to decay, have we strengthened and advanced it? All this is before us; before us daily—hourly. In both the fact of doing it, and the manner of doing it, we have our Blessed Lord as the Example and Type. The question will certainly sooner or later be asked of each one of us: “For Me, and for My Kingdom—for My poor, and for My Church—for the sheep of My fold, and the lambs which I would fain cherish in My Bosom—what has been done? Where has been your work? I have shown you the way—why have you not followed? I have led you forward, and you have gone backward. I have preached in your streets, and worked miracles, and done many wonderful things, and yet you have not heard—neither have you believed Me—neither have you loved Me—neither have you followed Me. Depart from Me now, ye that work iniquity.”

Let us pass on now from those duties of life which may be called the official or ministerial, to

those which are more strictly domestic, or private. And here, too, our Lord stands forth as conspicuous an example as before. First, as a child to a parent. When twelve years old, His parents came in search of Him, and found Him in the temple, and His mother said, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing;" and He said, "How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business;" whereby He seems to suggest a reason for the apparent desertion of His earthly parents, in the duty which He was performing towards His Father which was in Heaven; but then, lest they should misunderstand His meaning, or it should be inferred in any way that He was an undutiful child, it is cleared up in that which immediately follows: "And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." And as we have this example of filial duty set forth in the commencement of His life, so we have another, still more beautiful, in the conclusion of it. Jesus is nailed to the cross—the agonies of death are upon Him—the salvation of the whole human race depends upon the victory which He shall then achieve over Satan; but, in the midst of all these high and (as we should think) all-absorbing thoughts, He beholds His Mother. No sooner does He look upon her, than He forgets all His own more immediate bodily and mental pains, and sympathises with the grief which she was suffering on

His account. He thinks of the loneliness, and probable desertion and abandonment, by all the world, which would await her after His death—friendless, unprotected, and forgotten—and thus the Evangelist relates it: “When Jesus, therefore, saw His Mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His Mother, ‘Woman, behold thy Son!’ and then He saith to the disciple, ‘Behold thy Mother!’ and from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.” Nothing can surpass the intense feeling of loving solicitude and affection which is here depicted: the thoughtfulness, the anxiety, the tenderness, of the most affectionate son. How it reflects on *us*! How it reflects on the coldness and distant tone of intercourse which now too often passes as the rule of ordinary life between parents and children. “Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother,” saith the Law of God. Of the four generations which Solomon, in the Book of Proverbs, pronounces as wicked, this is one: “There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.” And, in the twenty-first chapter of Deuteronomy, the death of a rebellious child is set forth as the punishment commanded by God Himself: “So shalt thou put evil away from among you, and Israel shall hear and fear.” But it is not a mere abstinence from outrageous acts of disobedience that our Blessed Lord’s example inculcates—it is the loving affection of the heart. What must it have been to that

Mother to sit by the side of that Son, to hear and to instruct, to guide and to be guided through a life of thought and toil for many years, and the Cross shadowed out ever as the end? What it must have been to that Son to know all along that a sword was ever to pierce through her own heart also, and that sword Himself? How those two, One very God Himself, the other the Mother of God—must have been linked and joined together in some mysterious bond of unity which passes all human comprehension; for it is a mystery! We cannot attain, as children and parents, to *that* love; for it was peculiar, and only could exist in such a relationship as there existed—never before or after seen or to be seen—a Virgin Mother of a Living God, and that God very God and Man together. Still, as a Man to a Mother, the type is given—a holy and a beautiful type. Let us adore that mystery in the sacred reserve with which the Gospel overshadows it. And should there be among us now, at this present moment, any with parents' love broken—with parents' interests unheeded—with parents' memory uncherished—let us rise up and follow Christ to His Cross, and, turning back in repentance and love, say—"Woman, behold thy Son!" and "Son, behold thy Mother!"

But there are other domestic affections than those of the parent and the child—other ties which knit and tie souls together, giving some solace in the miseries of this perishable world, by the bonds

and intertwinings of heart with heart. Had our Blessed Lord any such? It would seem that He had. We can trace it in the domestic scenes of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, recorded in S. John. In the family of Lazarus, Jesus seems more domesticated than in any other. Mary is described as "sitting at Jesus's Feet, and heard His word." But in the character of Martha there was a failing: she was cumbered about much serving—jealous that her sister should leave her to serve alone. How mild the rebuke: "Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things, but one thing is needful."

It is expressly said, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." But Lazarus fell sick and died. They send to Jesus to inform him of it. "Lord, behold he whom Thou lovest is sick." After some delay He comes to Bethany, where they abode, and then follows one of the most deeply affectionate scenes of domestic sorrow that, perhaps, was ever written. "When Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus, therefore, saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in spirit, and was troubled." Then closely after it is said, "Jesus wept." Then said the Jews, "Behold how He loved him!" We can hardly wonder, such being His love, that He should have exerted His Divine Power to prove it. But the miracle was

very great—the greatest work of all His life, to prove the love of man for man. He that had been dead four days broke forth from the tomb alive, at the Voice of the Son of God: “Lazarus, come forth.”

You may trace still further the same character of gentle domestic love, in the friendship which our Lord bore to the three favored Apostles—James, and John, and Peter—but more particularly to S. John, who is so often called “the beloved Apostle,” the disciple “whom Jesus loved,” “who lay on His Breast at supper.”

These particulars, closely traced, betray most emphatically the domestic and affectionate character of our Lord. In the first instance, His filial subjection; in the second, His choice of friends; in the third instance, His choice of the closest of friends. They speak to us, my brethren, with the voice of example, and say—Preserve in your families the order and subjection of your different relationships. Let parental, and filial, and fraternal love obtain their proper position and value; and seek for yourselves, for the solace of the many troubles and afflictions which it will be of necessity your lot to encounter, such Christian friendships, such bosom counsellors and advisers, as, under God, and on a principle of religion, shall minister to your wants, and comfort you in the hours of distress. Society in the present day seems so constituted, as to chill and check those purer delights of

domestic love which we might imagine to have dwelt in the house of Lazarus, or in the bosom of S. John. What it must have been to have had the Blessed Son of God sitting among them, as one familiar in household things, served by Martha, and with Mary sitting at His feet, hearing holy words of ghostly counsel in the familiarity of friendship? Have *we* such opportunities? Do *our* hearths welcome such guests? Do *our* spirits stir within us at such domestic scenes of love? All our intercourse seems to be nothing but one blazing scene of worldly ostentation and display. Genuine hospitality has faded out; and the society of the good and of the holy, sought for in the needs of man's spiritual nature, has given way to pomp, and show, and glitter, wherein are no feelings but those of pride on the one side, and envy, jealousy, and meanness on the other. We seem to live but in one continual attempt to deceive each other by assumptions of grandeur to which we have no right, and attempts at finery which in every one's eyes but our own make us ridiculous. Simplicity of manners, an unostentatious table, a frugal establishment, plainness of dress, sincerity in friendships, friends sought for holiness and worth, and not for interest and vain-glory—these are points held in the world's estimation as absurd and antiquated; they would meet with laughter if propounded seriously as points of duty to be attempted. Well, then, what of our Lord? Is He our example, or is He

not? I would say, from Him—from His own singular manifestation of it—that personal friendships, personal objects of love according to the sphere of life in which God places us, may justly be sought for and encouraged. Out of the general body of disciples our Lord had His twelve chosen Apostles. Out of the twelve He seems to have chosen three more intimate than the rest, to be with Him in His more solemn trials and sorrows. Out of the three *one*—one very much beloved above all the rest—one who leant on His Breast at supper—one whom He made, by special bequest, the depository of all He loved on earth when He departed, that all being His own most holy Virgin Mother. This surely justifies us, where we can find it, and where we can escape from the common trivialities of a hackneyed world, in treasuring up each for the other some one faithful loving breast, before whom, in the intimacy of unrestrained love, we may pour forth our sorrows, or hear theirs—seek counsel or give it—and lay bare, in the congeniality and oneness of spirit which belongs to friendship in its truest sense, every thought either of sin or of doubt, or of anticipation, or of hope, or of joy. If there is any one thing that sweetens life, that, amidst the turmoil and hurry of this insincere and hypocritical world is any compensation or set-off against the disappointments of our daily toil, it surely is some such solace as this which I now describe. Contemplate the highest and most aspiring

scenes of human ambition—contemplate the lowest and most degraded state of mere bodily labour—the statesman, immersed from morning to night in dazzling scenes of political aggrandisement—the merchant, who toils day by day through long hours of anxious weariness, balancing his merchandise and his gains—the professional man, plodding onward in his oft-repeated never-ceasing round of drudgery upon drudgery—the tradesman, plying his skilfulness in the market and the exchange. Contemplate such as these, from the highest to the lowest, and ask them what it is that in all the wearisomeness of their daily task consoles and buoys them up, that encourages them in their hopes, gives zest and freshness to each succeeding day? If they be right-minded men, if they are free of the debasing unrealities of the world—if they have learned of Christ the treasure of peace in Him—the answer will be, “It is the retirement, it is the quiet retreat, it is the love and affection which I know are waiting for me, with God and religion, AT HOME.”

What sort of man can that be who has not some such feeling as this: a home—a beloved one—a friend—a child? What sort of stony heart, impervious to all the blessings and goodness of God, must that be, whose whole spirit is centered in the external, public displays of promiscuous assemblies, the political, the gay, and the fashionable, and finds no delight in the simpler pleasures of domestic affection—who has no friendship but

the world, no pleasure but in the market-place, the counting-house, or the senate—no happiness but in gain and reputation—who is found for ever in the public places of the club, or the theatre, or the ball-room, but not in the chaste and christian society of his own domestic hearth?

O, be sure there is a lack of the spirit of Christ in such a man. He has not studied the example of Jesus. He has not taken home to his bosom the simplicity of manners, and the contentment with little, and the absence of all show, and glitter, and display, which was in HIM so conspicuous. Such a man as this we should find in the society of Herod and Herodias, because they were princes—or of Pontius Pilate the Governor, because he was a great man—or of the proud High Priest, or the hypocritical Pharisees, because they were high in the world. With these, would such an one spend his days, and not, like our example, Jesus the Saviour, be found with “poor Lazarus who was sick;” or shedding tears with “Martha and Mary;” or praying for His disconsolate mother; or thinking of the disciple “whom He loved,” and who “leaned on His breast at supper.”

These are the great and mighty ones of the earth. Princes, whose favor men court; and kings, before whom they would bow the neck for a smile. It is well with them in times of gladness and prosperity. It is well with them when summer breezes blow gently along the smooth current of

their life, and there is nought all around to disturb, or to alarm. But some discomfiture begins—a chance, as it seems to man, has arisen, and an ill favor is scattered over the fair reputation of our name; or may be some real heavy sin has overcome us, and we are cast out of the sight of the righteous, and sorrow of heart weighs with a heavy load upon us. Where are the great ones of the earth now? Where princes and kings? “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in princes.” David well knew and felt that truth when he said it. David, whose chequered life had once felt the bonds of a loving friend in Jonathan, could well speak of that ardent oneness of love which joined them wholly together, to the disparagement of kings’ and princes’ love, which is as treacherous and moveable as the sand on the seashore. How beautifully is it said of the love of these two young men, “He loved him as he loved his own soul.” (1 Sam. xx. 17.)

My brethren, I would humbly say, as speaking before some of such great ones, whose tendency to be swayed by the age and its fashion is proverbial—I would humbly say, let it never be my lot to imagine, for an instant, your favor or your love as objects for my guidance in the duties which I have to do on your behalf: I mean your favor or love in respect of your position as such great ones of the earth. But let it be my lot to value them solely according to the worthiness of

your individual character, and the steadfastness with which you will embrace with me the Cross of Jesus Crucified, hating the world, and the things of the world therein. And let it never be your lot, in the varied changes of a dangerous life, which must, in some sort, visit you (and the higher in rank and position you are the more dangerous), let it never be your lot to seek for guidance and counsel the society or friendship of worldly men such as yourselves. If God should afflict us, either you or me, let us each, in our several spheres, seek counsel of the Lord, and not of man. Let us have our bosom-friend, our monitor, our treasured and beloved counsellor, in some man of God, whose stability we know, and whose fidelity we can trust. Let your words of friendship and of love be words which the holy angels may delight to strengthen, and the saints above delight to hear, and with their intercessions help. Be found not in kings' courts, except it be of your bounden duty—nor in palaces, except you be there to do some higher office for your country, or your king; but be found ever among the gentle and the pure, the simple-minded and the righteous. Hear their words, and love their sayings: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Seek not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Keep your hearts down, subdued, humble. In the lowest—not in the

highest—with Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus, and S. John, you will find, and there only find, Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

SERMON VII.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE IN THE THINGS OF SELF.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S IN THE EASTER SEASON, 1850.)

1 S. PETER II. 21.

“Leaving us an Example that we should follow His Steps.”

WE cannot but feel anxious to know by what process of education, or discipline, the passions of human nature were in our blessed Lord so controlled and regulated, as to produce the fruits which we behold in His most holy life. We know that He *“was in all things tempted like as we are,”* inasmuch as His nature was no more or less than ours is—“sin only excepted”—that is, that He universally succeeded in triumphing over His temptations. We know that He presented to the world a spectacle of sinless and spotless perfection, but being Man He could not have achieved that perfection without struggles, without difficulties, without liability to fall, and we cannot, therefore, but be anxious to know what that was which in Him produced the invariable success attending on

Him. If such were the actions of our Lord, what was the *mind* from which those actions emanated? What is the distinction which separates the mind of our Lord from all other human minds, and causes it to stand out alone as a perfect human mind? There must be some ruling general principle which pervades it. There must be something peculiar, as the Apostle terms it, in the "*spirit* of Christ," which, if we can detect, we shall have at once the key to that success which carried Him through all things, pure, immaculate, and holy. Now, what is this general principle? Before, when we spoke of the devotional character of our Lord in the practice of His duties to God, or when we spoke of Him in the practice of His duties to man, we dealt mainly with His character in the results—we observed certain great features of sanctity, obedience, loving affection, integrity—but we did not attempt to draw the veil which hung over Him, so as to see the basis, or ground-work, on which it all was formed. But every one has some foundation on which the actions of his life are built. There is some leading tone which gives consistency, strength, and beauty to the rest. What is this leading tone? It will not be sufficient, when we want to make a copy of a picture, that we make a mere hard, linear, mechanical representation of it; we may be exact in our measurements, and accurate in our distances, and yet preserve none of the spirit and genius of the master whom we copy. So in the

study of our Lord, viewing Him as our great Example and Guide. We must study His principles, not only His actions; watch keenly the breath which animated the frame-work of that most perfect life, and not the frame-work only. As in great mechanical contrivances, however various, and whatever works they are designed to perform, they have a moving power which sets the whole in motion; so in human character, there is always some leading moving impulse which gives the actions flowing out of it their life. How shall we detect it? How shall we gather out of the multiplicity of holy things, feelings, words, and deeds, of which we have spoken, the moving principle of all. It will not be mentioned in any set description of Himself. It will not be paraded forth as a point of moral philosophy, or logical deduction. We shall only detect it by watching, in a great many circumstances, some one point which is to be gathered out of them all, in a great many positions of difficulty, temptation, or duty, some one basis which may be applied to all; that basis will be the principle of which we are in search, that key will be the one by which we shall unlock the whole fastenings of that admirable spirit which was the mind of Christ Jesus.

Pursuing this plan, we shall find two great principles of moral action to be the moving power in our Blessed Lord. The first is *Self-Denial*. The second is *Decision*.

I. All He did was for others; never anything for

self. It was for the glory of God on the one hand, the happiness of men on the other. In the very fact of His existence at all, as man, in human nature, conversing and living with us on earth—in that very outset and commencement is self-denial; for what did He in this act? He was in the glory of God, and was God, in the bosom of the Father. By Him all things were made that were made. He was there from all eternity, co-equal with the Father; and yet He voluntarily set aside all this divine glory, and took upon Himself the form of a servant—not of the holy angels—not of the heavenly host, who, though created beings, still had some emanations of glory by which they were celebrated in the praises of heaven—not of these, but of man, created, lost, abandoned, sinful man, and was born of a virgin, and laid in a manger with the oxen. That was surely, in its spring of action, *self-denial*. It was not for any advantage to Himself, solely for us. His glory was lost, our salvation secured. Then, having been born, He submitted Himself to the law, a degrading, irksome law, which signified, in its ceremonies and sacrifices, the presence of sin; and in this, denying self, He cheerfully took part, and made Himself, as it were to outward eyes, partaker with us in sin. He was circumcised. Why? Not because He needed it. It was a disgrace and a pain, and a discomfiture to Him. He heeded that not; because He knew that by submitting He should, by being under the law, conquer the law, and make

a pathway for us to the same victory in Him. Then all else followed in order. His presentation in the Temple—His subjection to earthly parents—His going up to Jerusalem—His presence at festivals—until we come to the last great scene of His suffering and agony in the garden of Gethsemane, and the cross of Calvary. What was all this but a degradation, a disgrace, a misery, and continual distress. Thus it was said, “A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We hid, as it were, our faces from Him, and we esteemed Him not.” And what was all this for? It might be said, for the glory of God. If so, it was suffered by Him as the Son for the Father, as the Son in manhood, and, therefore, not for His own glory, but for the Father’s. He said once, “Glorify Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the worlds were;” as if He felt sensibly that He was then deprived of that glory. Self-denial, then, was the leading principle, it might be said, for the salvation of man. It was so; but could not man have been saved without such extreme sufferings as here we see depicted? That was not the question with Him. Having once taken upon Himself to work the work of Him that sent Him, it was no longer a question how far He might go, or how far He might withdraw. He gave Himself up in all things to do another’s will, and not His own. He was no longer the judge, or the disposer of what was required; but whatever *was* required, He suffered. Self-denial was the leading

principle; and then you hear Him continually say, as giving the key of which we are speaking, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." I came down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.

That we may trace this still closer, let us take the three leading branches of the Christian spirit as taught in the Gospel: purity, contentment, and humility. All these depend on self-denial.

1. To keep the body chaste and temperate, to abstain from the gratification of fleshly lusts, to correct and chasten those irregular desires which nature for ever dictates, involves, evidently, a continual denial of the natural man—a continual conflict with and beating down of those propensities which belong to us as animal beings. We cannot be pure unless we do violence, more or less, to the gratification of self. Purity, therefore, depends on self-denial.

2. Take again Contentment. It is not natural to be contented with little. Witness the general running of the world after riches and power. What are the objects of these riches and power? Not, surely, the salvation of our souls; not, surely, the happiness of other men; not, surely, the glory of God; no, but our own bodily and sensual comforts—our own temporal enjoyments—our own selfish indulgences—in the ease, and luxury, and delight, which generally belongs, or, we think, generally belongs, to those who are high in

the things of the world's enjoyment. Well, then, to despise all this—to cast it aside as valueless—to have none of it—to reject it when offered by the tempter—to be content with little—to live in a poor, narrow, circumscribed state—is a violation and denial of SELF.

3. Take, again, Humility. It is the same thing again. What man can say that it is natural to him willingly to be debased—to go and sit down in the lowest seat—to hear of the applause, and grandeur, and mightiness of his rivals—to sit down on the first step of the ladder, while that brother, who was once his equal, is climbing to the top? Who can see this without a pang of jealousy, or envy—without some little cankering of the heart, and restlessness of the spirit?

To be rid of all this—to be, with Him, despised and rejected of men—is self-denial. But our Lord is the Example in every one of these points. His purity is beyond the shadow of a question; you never hear a word even by His bitterest enemies raised against it. His contentment with a moderate supply of His bodily wants is conspicuous, when we are told that “He had not where to lay His Head:” His humility, when we behold Him washing His disciples’ feet. Hunger and thirst, and weariness, and want, He must have felt continually in the body; but He bore them without a murmur, even as He did, in the mind, the revilings of men, and the pains of the cross. Delight

and gratification at the applause of the world, He must have been tempted, as we are, to feel continually; but He withdrew from it as dangerous and unworthy, courting rather that world's obloquy than its favor. Behold Him in His ministry, never ceasing in preaching to the multitude, in expounding parables to His chosen few, in praying, in watching—and all for them; and this without regard of bodily fatigue. As He sat upon the well, weary with His journey, He asked for water to drink; but soon forgetting the material water to drink, He began to pour forth out of Himself fountains of the living water of the Spirit. When He was retiring to meditate and hold private communing with God in the desert, He yet abandoned that gratification, on hearing that the multitude were waiting for Him without. In fact, without applying to further particular instances, there could not be conceived a life of man so utterly without a shadow of inclination either to the glory in mental things, or the comfort in spiritual things of self. Miracles were worked, for others; prayers were made, for others; teaching was made, when the opportunity came, for others. Is bodily refreshment needed? He forgets it. Is personal danger to be encountered? He gives it no care. Is ridicule to be withstood? He suffers it. Is contempt, and spitting, and scourging, and blasphemy, to be poured out round about Him? He bears it. Is Judas to betray Him? He is

anxious to the last for the traitor, not for Himself. Is Peter to deny Him? He prays for him, that his faith fail not, and thinks of the brethren whom he may convert. Does one smitten with zeal cut off the ear of the high priest's servant? He thinks of the sufferer beside Him, not Himself, and heals the wound. Do the women of Jerusalem weep round about Him, and bewail? He says, "Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves." Thus, in all it was "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

Need I ask you, my brethren, whether you, as the disciples of this Master, have any right to consider yourselves exempt from a similar life of self-denial? Need I point out to you, that if you would attain those beauties of character which we are so ready to admire in the public and general features of Christ, and are all so ready in this abstract admiration to start forth and become philanthropists, and patriots, and good citizens, and good sons, and friends and brothers—need I point out to you, that without this leading key to the whole in the Self-denial of Christ, all your attempts will be vain? What is loving God, and doing as God commands, but contradicting one's own natural propensities? What is going about and doing good to others, but in proportion a violation of the natural law of man, to please *himself* only? What is Christ's law of purity, not only in the body, but in the heart and mind? What is abstinence and tem-

perance, and hatred of the world? What is the one thing needful, the selling all that we have, the hating father and mother, and wife, and children, and lands, and houses for His sake—what is it all, but this simple doctrine of SELF-DENIAL? And do you think, when you go forth (if it be so) from your dwellings, day after day, and night after night, in all the luxury, and pride, and comforts of riches, and think only of *yourself*, that in that case you can truly place yourself as the follower of that Master Who said, expressly said, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

Let me ask you, in all the searching spirit of that Gospel which Christ taught, and in all the strength of that example which Christ gave, where is your instance of self-denial? What have you done against yourself? From what have you withholden? Where is your cross? Have you suffered pain for Christ? Have you suffered hunger for Christ? Have you been weary with toil? have you borne reproof? have you accepted gladly jests and scoffings? have you gone out of your way to help a failing brother, to teach an erring sister, to reclaim a lost sheep, to gather in a straying lamb? Have you been misunderstood, and minded it not—deceived, and heeded it not—betrayed, and borne it cheerfully? Have you debarred yourself from any pleasure which it was your general habit to pursue? Have you dropped any smooth luxury

in which, from your position in life, it had been your custom to indulge? Have you, in short, ceased a single pleasure, or cut yourself short in a single vanity, or deprived yourself of a single toy in the thousand thousands of this perishing scene? O! surely there must be something of this character to shew, something of affinity to the self-denying mind of Jesus, before you can take to yourself justly the Name of Jesus.

Do not let us be deceived—do not let us fancy that because we have all the outward semblance of Christianity, that because we have good credit among men, and say our prayers, and hear sermons, and preserve an outward decency of moral virtue, and keep within the bounds of the religion of the world, that therefore we have the Spirit of Christ. No! I would test its truth by this simple touchstone—a self-denying spirit. Where that is not, there is not Christianity. This world has a happy facility of accommodating itself to itself; smooths down the rough places, and raises up the low; puts bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; and invents many an interpretation of softness for the strict things of the Gospel, so as to obtain a little peace with itself. But the peace of the world is a mere mockery; a delusion, which will end only in the eternal wrath of God. Men keep crying to their own consciences, “Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” We require you, as a disciple of Christ, to examine yourself, to sift and search your inward

hopes, and thoughts, and wishes. We require you to go back to the years that are past, to examine the years that are present, and see whether you can say thus to the scrutiny of a truthful conscience: "Here and here I have left undone that which I had a strong desire to do; and here I have done that which I had a strong desire to leave undone. I have sacrificed that which I loved, because I loved Christ better. I have acted in opposition to that which my natural inclination led me to pursue, because of His example Whose Name I bear. I have given way where I wanted to conquer; and I have conquered where I wanted to give way. I have felt pleasure, and I checked it. I have felt grief, and I mastered it. I have gone contrary to myself, and done despite to myself, and have made a cross in His cross Who died for me, because I have heard Him say, 'Take up thy cross and follow Me.'"

II. But let us now go on to what I have selected as the second leading principle of the spirit of Christ: it was *Decision*. There are many who will agree theoretically with all that has been said, and even try to put it into execution; but they will fail—not for want of having a will—but for want of decision in their will—for want of firmness, steadfastness, and strength in their will.

We daily perceive many of the most amiable and kindest disposition, many of the sincerest intention, many of the most industrious and anxious interest and zeal in the things of God,

yet altogether thrown back, and rendered useless, by mere indecision of character. They are swayed backwards and forwards by the alternate strength or weakness of the opinion which they last hear. They court the praise, or they fear the censure, of those who stand around them. Left to themselves, they are able to choose aright, and make their judgment clearly; but coming into contact with the world, and the variety of opinion which the world presents, they "reel to and fro like a drunken man;" and having no clear sight of the object of their actions, their actions present a medley of irresolute and discordant variety. Judgments made, but actions counteracting those judgments; wishes sincerely breathed, but no hand raised to put those wishes into effect; a seed well sown, but no watering of the seed, and therefore no harvest. Now, if you will examine the character of our Lord, you will be directly struck with the uniformity of purpose—the decision, the promptness, the confident tone, with which He said and did every thing. He never hesitated for one instant in any line of conduct which He once adopted. He never vacillated from this side to that side, according as He found the majority of opinions for or against Him. It was to Him a matter of perfect indifference what the people thought, or the rulers thought, or the Priests and Pharisees thought, of what He should say or do. Their opinion could not alter the rectitude of what He was engaged in.

He was surprised by no suddenness of emergency. He was astonished by no strangeness of appearances. He was disappointed by no failure in His expectations. No one ever found Him unprepared with an answer, or ignorant how to shape His course. He was ready for all, and at all times. His judgment was clear at the instant it was demanded, and action followed that judgment, instantaneously and decidedly.

Take, for instances of this, the answers which He made to the Jews, when they came with insidious questions involving a dilemma. The question of paying tribute to Cæsar—of divorce, of the resurrection of the dead (involved in the case of the seven brethren taking unto them, one after the other, the same wife)—the question of the “authority by which He did these things,” as given in S. Matthew xxi.—the question as to “which was the great commandment in the law”—in all these you see the clear and decisive tone of mind which dictated His replies. The several questions were directly robbed of all their difficulties, and divested of all the sting which was meant to be contained in them, by the luminous unwavering clearness by which the truth was pointed out.

Look, also, at the great scene of His Temptation. In that scene were depicted all the pleasures of the flesh, of the world, of glory, of ambition, of power. Thrice did Satan assail Him with all the skill and perversion of truth of which he was master, quot-

ing even Holy Scripture to give a decent semblance to his foul suggestions. But what did Jesus? Did He show any appearance of tampering, even for an instant, with that enemy of souls? Did He ask permission to consider of the matter for a few days, and so postpone it, because He knew not how to deal with it? Did He reply that He had not yet made up His mind how far He could comply, consistently with other duties—that the advantages proposed were very great, and required a due consideration—that possibly there might be some good which lurked behind the apparent evil—that, accordingly, He would defer the final answer to a more convenient season? Did any question of that which was *EXPEDIENT*, as separate from that which was *RIGHT*, disturb Him? Did He allow within His mind any sophistical subtilties, by which He might argue Himself into exceptions in His own case *particularly*, as against the case of right and wrong *abstractedly*? This is what *we* do, but it was not what Jesus did. No; His clear and undisturbed mind saw directly through the mist of darkness with which the tempter clouded over his proposals. He hesitated not one instant—He held no parley—He asked for no delay; but the judgment was forthwith pronounced: “Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.”

Take, again, those cases where decision of the mind in judging was followed up by a promptitude

of action. That of the man with the withered hand (Matt. xii.), "They asked Him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day, that they might accuse Him?" He knew the object of the question. He knew the character of the men around Him. The question was answered by a course of argument, drawing to this conclusion: "Wherefore it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath day." But that was not all; for "then saith He to the man, Stretch forth thine hand; and he stretched it forth, and it was restored whole like as the other." Here, in their very presence, fearless of their malignity, because confident in the rectitude of His purpose, He not only answered the question, but did the very thing which they had suggested as a question of difficulty.

At another time, after rebuking the Pharisees in His usual fearless manner, the disciples came to Him in surprise: "Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?" But this was no matter of surprise to Him any more than it was a cause of alarm; that they would be offended He knew perfectly well. Fear of them did not deter Him in his conduct, any more than their applause would have encouraged Him; He merely replied, "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind. If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." It was no otherwise in the final scene of His betrayal and death. Those last sufferings were constantly before Him.

He was continually alluding to them. The cup that He was to drink, and the baptism that He was to be baptized with; the lifting up upon the tree; the betrayal; the death He should die; the disgrace, the sorrow—all were familiar objects; and so, when His hour approached, there was no hesitation, no demur, no complaining. The officers and the chief priests came to search for Him; He comes boldly forth, and says, "Whom seek ye?" and when they said, "Jesus of Nazareth," He replied, "I am He." Before the high priest He is silent; and nothing can move Him to speak, until adjured by the Living God. Before Pontius Pilate, He at once replies with the same decision with which He was before silent. He at once replies to the question "Art thou a king, then?"—"Thou sayest it." Led forth to the cross, mocked, scourged, derided, smitten—in all there is the same decision and fixedness of purpose. Moved neither to the right hand, nor to the left, by anything that man can say or do; bearing all things with patience, but with determination; with submission, but with resolute and unflinching perseverance, until the end which was judged to be right in the mind, was achieved and perfected in action.

So then, my brethren, for ourselves, how shall we attain this decision of character? Rest assured that without this decision, I will not say in the full extent which we see exemplified in our Lord, but without a considerable approximation to it, our re-

ligion and our faith will never tell, will never be of use to any, either for God's glory or man's good. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Look two ways, and you will choose neither. Have two masters, and you will do injury to both. It is true that there is a decision of character, which, when exercised on a wrong subject, amounts to obstinacy; as there is a promptness in action, which, founded upon levity of character, amounts to rashness. But I am not speaking now of the right or wrong of the subjects of our opinions—*that* would require a separate discussion; but I am speaking as in the case of our Lord Himself, an example of imitation, in points granted to be right, because taught of Him. And do we not now see daily, on subjects of acknowledged right, unquestioned and unquestionable duty—do we not see the men of flexible and accommodating principles, now judging and thinking rightly, now starting aside like a broken bow. Do we not see even our rulers, and that not only in temporal but spiritual things, taking up the doctrine of expediency, so as to shift from this side to that, for what they imagine to be safety, popular applause, fear of men, the opinions of the great, love of ease, dread of disquiet—all which mean and unworthy motives keep pressing on to the ultimate destruction of real principle and integrity of character. We shall soon be utterly overwhelmed in this incongruous mass of indecision and defining of the truth, and com-

promise with wrong. Deferring of the truth must end ultimately in its denial; as in his case who said with one voice, "Lord, I will follow Thee;" but with another, "Let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house."

If you would follow Jesus, it must be with a perfect freedom from all such double minds, or such hesitating affections. You must endeavor, with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, to treasure up within you a firm reliance on the rectitude of those principles which you have assumed; and then upon those principles you must act, cost you what it may. Your knowledge of God's Word, and God's ways—your firm conviction of the solid foundation on which you stand—your faith in the promises of ulterior happiness which awaits you—your conviction of the vanity, frivolity, and perishable tenure of things earthly—be they of the very highest estimate among men; all this should generate in your heart such a decision of character as should enable you to bear alike the ridicule or the praise of men—the flattery or the frowns of men—as should send you forth in all things prepared, when God calls upon you, to witness a good confession. When the voice is heard among us, as very soon it will be, "Who is on the Lord's side, who?" be ready to take your stand on one side or the other. Make no attempt to be neutral. Neutrals are always objects of contempt, as they are justly objects of suspicion. They are objects of contempt,

because their hesitation betrays cowardice; and they are objects of suspicion, because it is fairly thought that they are waiting for sinister ends to catch the side which shall prevail. They are not caring for truth, but themselves. Better to take the side of the world, and there abide, than to be afraid of taking the side of God; for, in the very act of being so afraid, you are virtually God's enemy. Take your side, then, brethren. Make your choice; but, when you have once made it, abide by it; and rather than desert your Master and Lord—your God and your King—let heaven and earth pass away. God's Word will not pass away. Life may pass away—riches may pass away—fair fame and the favor of men may pass away; but not the faith of Jesus—if, with Peter, you are as a Rock, and are built on the Rock, the Church of the Living God.

The subject is not exhausted; but I have said enough for the present need: perhaps more than enough; for the very exalted character of the things set forth may be points of despair to some, as though they never could attain them. No! You never will attain them; but that will not render it unnecessary to make the attempt. Our Lord Himself says, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father Which is in heaven is Perfect;" although He knew that such perfection was unattainable, save by Himself. But He meant, *strive* to be perfect—do

your best—approach as near as you can. We shall not fall the shorter because we aim the higher. There is strength from on high, and grace, and spiritual guidance to the brave and the vigorous, which the timid and the despairing know not of. We cannot tell what we may be, or what we may do, or to what height of glory we may be called, before we try. Even the trial is an act of faith. Study the character of Jesus, and pray. Pray and study that character, and ask to have just one point of His likeness conceded to you; that one will help you to the second quicker than you think. As the prophet Elisha was to the dead child of the Shunamite, when he stretched forth his body upon the child's body, laid his mouth upon the child's mouth, his eyes upon the child's eyes, and his hands upon the child's hands, and so fitted and adjusted himself, and formed his posture to the boy, and breathed into him, and the spirit of his life returned, at the prayer of the prophet: even so, if our lives are adjusted faithfully and consistently by the life of Jesus—Hand to hand, Heart to heart, and Spirit to spirit. If we make the lineaments and habits of the Blessed Son of God our lineaments and habits—if we are living daily in Him and for Him, it is certain that by degrees our bodies will be filled to a fuller extent of holiness, and our minds with a deeper intensity of faith, than now it enters into our hearts to conceive. We shall grow on and on in good works—be stronger

and stronger in faith: we shall, day by day, become richer in the gifts of the Spirit, and fuller in the virtues of the Gospel, until at length we may, in the language of Holy Scripture, somewhat approach, if not quite, "The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

SERMON VIII.

THE KING'S PALACE.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE 4TH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, 1850; BEING
THE DAY OF OFFERINGS FOR S. BARNABAS' CHURCH.)

PSALM xlv. 12.

*“And the Daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift;
like as the rich also among the people shall make their
supplication before Thee.”*

WHAT a picture of glory and magnificence does this Psalm of David set before us! Kings and kings' daughters—kingdoms and sceptres of kingdoms—garments smelling of myrrh, aloes, and cassia—a queen brought unto a king in a raiment of needlework—virgins bearing her company—the queen in a vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colors: and all in one joyous company, entering into “THE KING'S PALACE.”

And yet not only a picture; for it is a glad and beautiful reality. The King, of course we know, is Christ, our Lord. They are His Lips that are full of grace. It is His throne that endureth for ever. It is He that is anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows; and they

are His garments that smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces.

And, if so, who are the other kings, and who the kings' daughters? The kings, tributary under the great King, are the apostles, called, in another verse of the Psalm, "the children whom He made princes in all lands;" so called by Himself, in the New Testament, "sitting upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And the kings' daughters, saith S. Augustine, are "the churches, whom the kings, in evangelizing the world, were to found, and bring to Christ." And as each of the kings had his daughter, the local church, which he has founded, and over which he rules; so has the Universal King His Universal Church, and that is represented by the QUEEN. She is the aggregate and collected body of all the national churches, and she comes "in a vesture wrought about with divers colors," representing the various languages of the divers countries of the daughters, blended, however, into one "vesture of gold," representing their unity.

And this queen stands at the right hand of the King in His glory, taking the place of honor; and she becomes the bride of the King, just as it is said, in many places, that the Church is the spouse of Christ, and He the Bridegroom. Thus the whole is a princely nuptial song, full of holy teaching—"I will remember Thy name from one generation to another: therefore shall the people give thanks unto Thee, world without end."

But let us observe more closely. One of the daughters is the daughter of Tyre; and it is said that "she shall be there *with a gift*." This represents some Gentile church; and not only that, but some Gentile church of great wealth—for Tyre was celebrated for its riches. And it is continued, "like as the rich also among the people shall make their supplication before Thee." Whom may this daughter of Tyre represent now? Which among the churches? My brethren, let it represent us. For as Tyre was, so are we—a nation trafficking by the sea—a nation which contains many "rich among the people."

Behold how Ezekiel describes the great city of Tyre, and how exactly it matches with ourselves: "Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel: there is no secret that they can hide from thee. With thy wisdom and thy understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures. By thy great wisdom and thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches." And, in Isaiah, she is called "the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honorable of the earth." O, let not that fate await us which awaited Tyre. May we learn in time, and not use our wisdom, and power, and trade, for the purposes of sin and forgetfulness of God, as she did. "Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord, Because

thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said I am a god—I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas—yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thy heart as the heart of God: therefore I will bring strangers upon thee—the terrible of the nations—and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.” O, let not this be; but rather may she be as the prophet Isaiah describes it: “*Her merchandize and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord. It shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandize shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing.*” Yes; the parallel is sufficiently close to make us reflect. It is sufficiently close to justify us in considering ourselves a Gentile church—as the daughter of Tyre. Let us be so for this occasion. “She shall be there with a gift.”

Let us go on and learn further concerning her. First, let us learn *how she is described*; secondly, let us learn *what she does*.

First, let us learn *how she is described*.

It is said in the 14th verse, “The King’s daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold.” Two things: “*within*,” and “*her clothing*.” Two combined together—INTERNAL and EXTERNAL, and both “GLORIOUS.”

It is often a question with thoughtful men, where religion begins? whether it is moved originally from without, visibly, through the medium

of the senses, or whether it be moved from within by the invisible operations of God's Grace? In some it would appear as if religion, taking her spring and moving power from the influences of grace, merely used external things as a development of the devotion and the faith burning within; while, in others, it would seem as if the heart, being dead and inert of itself, were kindled into life by the powers and beauties of external objects working on the senses.

Thus, we might behold, on the one hand, the life of a saint so chaste, so pure, so lovely, as to need no adventitious ornaments to set it forth, and no impulsive excitements to move it; but being brought into being first by some secret virtue of regenerating power, is then cherished within, and nourished up into maturity by feeding on religious meditation, secret prayer, and holy writings. Nothing external has moved these holy aspirations—no magnificence—no delight of the eye—no rapture of the ear—but in the silence of the soul within has alone the glory of God been acknowledged.

But if it be granted that such a holy and pure flame of devotion may exist in some as God's gift, yet is it inevitable in them that they seek to display that which burns within by outward demonstration. For what do they? They kneel down, and pray: they rise up, and sing. Tears flow down their cheeks: songs of rapture escape from their lips: and then they go forth—and in

the magnificence of rituals—the solemnity of houses of prayer—the touching harmony of musical sounds—they find a way for the devotion which burns like a lamp within to escape and manifest itself. It must have an outlet. It must show itself. No otherwise than the seed which is sown in the earth by the hand of the husbandman, which, unless it be permitted to send forth a blade, and ear, and fruit, will pine, and die, and be no more. So with the internal devotion of the religious. It must seek unto God in actions of manifestation. It must have sounds. It must have sights. It must have voices. It must have sympathies. It must speak unto God aloud—in prayers—and in preachings—and in sacraments—which contain, from their essence, outward demonstrations of internal grace. It must have vestments, and clothe itself, or else it will burn out, and die.

But, on the other hand, we might imagine the religious impulse to be commenced in the reverse way, entirely from without; from the works of nature sometimes; from the works of art at other times; and that in proportion as works of art are in analogy with nature. For who has ever walked upon the mountain-top, and felt not, with the rarefied atmosphere of the height on which he stands, his heart, and his whole frame, beating closer, and nearer, and purer, unto the great God, the Creator of the scene he witnesses? Or who has gone forth at midnight gazing upwards at the

stars, when they shine forth in the darkness of the night, and not felt within him the awfulness and the grandeur of the Great Being Who is their Father, and they to Him as but a few myriads visible, of myriads more invisible; and then beholding, has not bowed himself down in adoration, feeling that peculiar faith in, and sympathy with, God which such a sight alone can give? The light—the ocean's boundless waters—darkness—the thunder of the autumn storm—the soft music of birds—the lowing of cattle—the bleating of the sheep afar—all these varied sounds of God's beautiful creation melt deep into the thoughtful spirit, and draw it imperceptibly towards Him. Chain up the spirit of a man from such objects of sense, and he becomes callous and hard. And this may account for the moral degradation of the inhabitants of great cities. They are shut up within brick walls—closed up in counting-houses and shops—have nothing to look upon or hear but their own miserable works of sin, and craft, and guile: moved to no love—exalted to no zeal—cramped in their ideas—they sink from littleness to littleness in the narrow sphere of their own creation, until the sinfulness of their hearts and their lives is terrible to look upon, both before God and man. But give free vent to the spirit, in ranging among God's wonderful creation, and devotion will follow. It may be rude; it may be unpolished; it may be even erroneous, as in savage life

it is ; but it is there : just as S. Augustine saith of light and color drawing him to God—"The eyes love fair and varied forms, and bright and soft colors. Let not these occupy my soul; let God rather occupy it, Who made these things very good indeed; yet He is very good, not they. And these affect me, waking, the whole day, nor is any rest given me from them. For this queen of colors, the light, bathing all which we behold, wherever I am through the day, gliding by me in varied forms, soothes me when engaged in other things, though not observing it. And so strongly doth it entwine itself round me, that, if it be suddenly withdrawn, it is with longing sought for, and, if absent long, saddeneth the mind."

Thus it is in nature, and from this analogy of nature we come in its degree to the works of art, when such works, imitating nature, are so formed as to delight the senses for the same intent and end. Even so, in a church or house of God, or a beautiful picture, or sweet music, or the sounds of psalmody, or grandeur of processions, or the holy signs of our faith—all these works of man's art (opposed to such as have only worldly ends in view) elevate, cheer, captivate, and subdue the spirit of a man, and bring him to God. Hard reason would say, This is a delusion, "God being a Spirit, we must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Of course. This is a truth undeniable; but observe, to worship God in spirit and in truth is the *end*, we are talking

of the *means*. Let us speak of the same thing, and use the same meaning, and we shall see, that if there be any difference at all it is only this, that while we all agree that "God is to be worshipped in spirit," some think it is to be done by intervening means of reason, the other by intervening means of imagination. Reason will worship God, or try to worship Him, in the dingy chamber of a miserable lodging, without an altar, without a priest, without a sound of human voice—alone, friendless, silent, selfish. And that will be called *mental* religion. Or reason will concede a little, and come out of such a miserable abode into a house of prayer, and its house of prayer will be constructed in a stiff formalism of walls and desks—cold, meagre, and barren; and there shall be the name of a priest, but as little of the action as is possible; and the name of an altar, but it shall be impoverished by disuse; and there shall be prayer, but it shall be without sound of harmony, or joint voices of response; and there shall be sacraments, but they shall have no outward sign; and there shall be preaching, but it shall be without the unction of reality, steeped in the rationalistic coldness of a dead corpse-like philosophy. Will such works of reason prevail to kindle faith—prevail to light up prayer—prevail to cause a man to fall down on his knees and adore God? Will not the souls of men who pursue such means as these flee away from such a scene in dismay at their own cold hearts, or

die at once in the mazes of a questioning infidelity? Yes; we have seen it so. Reason, in excluding sense as a means of kindling faith and prayer, becomes folly. True reason will appeal to sense—(I mean objects of sense)—will come out in a cold shivering from such a house of prayer as I have just described, and, studying Solomon's holy work, of God's own mind devised, will straightway bring all the beauties of nature, husbanded by art and man's device, to stimulate, to warn, to excite, and to cheer. His priest will be a real one, vested as the priests of old, in garments of light and color—and his altar will be beautiful, with chaste signs of the Faith of the Redeemer—and his prayers will be said in the tones of song, as David himself of old was wont to sing them, and our Blessed Lord, Who following in David's order, joined in the temple and the synagogue, fulfilling the law; and his sacraments will have in the outward signs, conspicuous and carefully marked, the reality of a communicating grace; so that the whole mind of the worshipper, filled with vital signs of the present, will be wrapt into warm visions of the future, contemplating God in a real adoration of the spirit, and seeing Him visibly in faith.

Well, then, it will not matter much, in regard of the thing before us now, whether religion begins from without or from within; no matter, since, if it begin from within, it must needs develope and perfect itself without, and so external grace and beauty will

be needed; and if it begin without, then it must needs perfect itself within—for, of course, mere external raptures, or mere theoretic admirations, are of themselves not to be accounted of.

And thus David says in the text, "The king's daughter is all *glorious within*, and her *clothing is of wrought gold*." If her clothing were of wrought gold only—if that were all—if there were round about her, beautiful vestments for her priests, beautiful houses of God for her prayers, fonts and altars for her sacraments, pictures and carved works of art, magnificent rituals, and choral harmony of sounds; if we saw the mere external bodies of men bowing down, shows and pageantries, mere sights and glories of the senses; and, at the same time, *within* we should behold "dead men's bones and all corruption," sin reigning triumphant, saintliness despised, godliness a mere pretence, no virtue, no good works, no alms, no abstinence, no self-sacrifice—then such "clothing of wrought gold" had better be cast aside, for in the Sight of God it would be as filthy rags.

But why should we suppose such a thing? The "clothing of wrought gold" without does not of necessity infer that there is no glory within. Some people, I fear, fancy it does, and on this ground denounce every approach to such clothing as a danger. On this ground they say, that Churches should be but little more than as I just now imagined, buildings of brick and mortar—that the clergy should be as

little marked as may be by holy vestments, or holy places, being but themselves fellow-sinners with the congregation; and they would imitate Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and gather themselves together against Moses and Aaron, and say, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Wherefore, then, lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" And they would say that altars, and their decorations, and their lights, and their vestments, and the separation of sanctuaries, and, in short, the whole theory of the sacredness of holy things, is but a Jewish formalism, which the God of Christianity would despise. To all which we should most readily agree, if only we found that it *were* a Jewish formalism. But arguing from our own experience in the works of nature, in the customs of men in their own cases of reverence, when reverence is due in things terrestrial, we should say, that the clothing of wrought gold was not only a necessary companion, but also a secret nurse and guard of the glory that is within; that the glory within would perish, or be lost, were it not for the clothing that is of wrought gold.

If we go before the courts of kings, what reverence do we manifest!—what guarding in ceremonial, lest we infringe due respect and order!—what multitudes of officers to shield and guard the throne, lest we go too near and desecrate!—what attention

in dress, lest we present an unseemly or a common appearance. Why is all this outward form preserved? but for the knowledge that we have, that by the form the inner grace is kept, and reverence of the things of the spirit is secured by the outward reverence of the things of the body. And then can we not see that the same idea applies to the court of the "KING OF KINGS"? What is human nature's law in the one case, is human nature's law in the other case. Thus David says in our very Psalm to-day, that the King's daughters and the Queen, and the virgins that bear her company, and the clothing of wrought gold, and the raiment of needlework—they all enter THE KING'S PALACE.

What is it all for? It is for the worship of the King. And where is the worship to be? In a place fit for the worship of a King. It is the glory of the throne of His Majesty on High—its safe guarding, its sacredness, its beauty.

And for this reason our first Christian fathers called the Church the Basilica, or "Royal Palace;" and in the book of Chronicles it is called a Palace: "The work is great, for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God." It is royal. It is in comparison with kings' palaces of the earth, (only so much more great and magnificent,) to be endued with every splendor, and clothed with every clothing of beauty and grace. Why do kings and queens build beautiful houses to dwell in, ceiled

houses, and painted with vermilion, and store up treasures therein, and heap up the works of curious art, for their own luxury and greatness? And why do the princes, and nobles, and other rich men of the earth, imitate them, and with great readiness and promptitude, rear up magnificent piles of costly art, and fill them with choice devices of their cunning workmen? And why do the bishops, who are princes of the Church, rear up for themselves, too, buildings which they expressly designate by the title of palaces, thereby signifying that they are, as indeed justly they are, mere tributary king under Christ? Why is all this, if withal the great King's palace is left *not* as a palace, but naked, poor, and deserted of all beauty?

I do not say that these things should not be done. I do not say either that kings and queens should have no royal abodes, nor nobles princely houses, nor bishops palaces; but this only I say, that while we so cheerfully do the one, we should not leave the other undone.

While we cheerfully assent to the principle among men, it would be a shame to us were we not to acknowledge it in reference to God also. All we want, all we would require, all that we ask for, is, that what men do for themselves they should do for God also. Not, brethren, a palace for a noble, and a barn for God; not surely our own houses, for our own miserable and sinful bodies, full of beautiful clothing of wrought gold, and of

jewels, and of pictures, and of many costly arts, gathered from all nations of the world, and then God's palace an empty shed, a barren piece of wretchedness, which makes us shudder as we enter in, and makes our very faith totter and tremble. It makes us say this, "Can men believe that here they worship God, and pray, and call Him King of kings and Lord of lords? Do they believe that here angels dwell, and join men in singing psalms of hallelujah; and can they say with their voices, 'Glory be to God in the Highest,' when there is no glory, no attempt at glory, no care for glory here upon the earth; can they *believe* this?"

My brethren, what must be the effect upon the minds of our poorer brethren in witnessing, as they tacitly do, the enormous contradictions which we, the priests of the sanctuary, and you, the higher orders of the laity, practically set before them? What are our expressions and words? Our God is called a KING, His dwelling a PALACE. What are our actions? We treat Him, in speaking of Him, as though He were no more than an ordinary man among ourselves; not kneeling in prayer, nor bowing down the head; not even keeping silence from profane remarks and jests. And His dwelling a palace! O fearful hypocrisy, when we desecrate it continually, by brawling within its sacred walls, by leaving its gates open to the wicked, by buying and selling within its precincts, and by refusing it any suitable provision for maintenance and order of

worship. The poor witness your own ceiled houses. What must they say of your belief, when the King's palace Whom you worship is a barn? Can they trust us? Will they trust us? Are we not driving them daily, through our own hypocrisy, by large troops, into hostility against a Church which can tolerate such enormities in silence?

And there is another aspect in this matter, which leads us to deeper thoughts still: it brings us to consider whether *doctrines* can long be held in their truthfulness and reality, when all about them is neglected and debased—and, specially, the blessed SACRAMENTS. The very essence of a Sacrament is, that it should have an outward form as well as an inward grace; and that the inward grace cannot exist without the outward form, the one being the channel of the other. If these outward forms, as a principle, are desecrated and made light of, then would it not seem (the clothing of wrought gold in which God has been pleased to invest His Blessed Sacraments being vitiated and decried) natural that the Sacramental grace itself should likewise be vitiated and decried?

Now, may not this account, in its degree, for the very depraved and carnal views with which so many men of the present day regard the grace of Baptism? When we see such irreverence in destroying the public ritual, disparaging the holy office, decrying the so-called superstition of water consecrated and blessed by the Church—fonts mutilated

and destroyed—recourse had to every kind of substitute for the decency and reverence of a Sacrament especially commended by our Lord—when we see this in externals, can we wonder that internally the idea of Sacramental grace in Baptism has withered away, and is well nigh lost? In the same way, in regard to the other holy Sacrament, may not the constant denial of the great doctrines of the holy Eucharist—of the real Presence—of the Sacrifice—of the spiritual junction and incorporation of the faithful in the Body of his Lord—“flesh of His Flesh, and bone of His Bone”—may not all this be attributable, in its degree, to what we have all so fearfully witnessed in these latter days: altars trampled under foot—the sanctuary desecrated—vestments and carvings treated as marks of superstition, and therefore abandoned—order and ceremonial esteemed as childish, and therefore set aside—the type perishing with its antitype—the spirit with the body? What is the consequence? The consequence is this: the shrine being despoiled, the memory of the Body within departs; the priests neglecting their ritual, the people have come to neglect the life and spirit of the doctrine; the clergy neglecting to observe their ceremonial, the people's contempt for the thing is the just response. The general course of men is to judge of the internal by the external. It is the only way which is before them. They have no other. Now, the

external is, in our churches, negligence and desecration. Belief, then, in a real Presence of the Lord's Body in the blessed Sacrament perishes. This belief lost, grace is lost by one great channel of God's appointment. This grace lost, unbelief goes on, and is expanded rapidly. The whole Church languishes and dies—priests do not believe themselves to be priests, for they never do the acts of a priest; the sacrifice of the altar is looked upon as a false and superstitious doctrine, simply because it is never practised, and the altar never in act made a place of sacrifice. The blessed Sacrament is shorn of its action as a sacrifice, shorn of its offering as priestly, shorn of its reverence as being the very Body and Blood of Christ, till it dwindles into a mere memorial, and differs but little from the doctrine of the Wesleyan or the Presbyterian. Then, I fearlessly say, the whole virtue of the action, as representative of Christ's Death, and imparting the merits of the Atonement of the Son of God, perishes, and is as nought. Be assured, brethren, that as the shrine guards the relics, as the casket guards the jewel, as the shell guards the pearl, so does the clothing of wrought gold, and the raiment of needle-work, and the garments smelling of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, and the virgins bearing the King company, and the sceptres, and the thrones, and the majesty, and the glory of sights and sounds (it is the weakness of our nature); each does, in its measure, guard the inner doctrines

of Christ's holy things, and keep the Sacraments in their pure gifts of grace, as God of His mercy willed them.

But let us revert to the King's daughter once more: let us see what she does. There is the clothing of wrought gold; it is God's will that it should be—it is part of the furniture of His palace. But how does she obtain this clothing of wrought gold, so as to become thus glorious within? It is said, "she is there *with a gift*, like as the rich also *make supplication* before Thee." Two things—GIFTS and PRAYERS. The whole principle of the magnificence of the houses of God—their every beauty in architecture, in decoration, and in solemnity of worship, is in their costliness. It is the gifts of the people—*i. e.*, of the rich among the people—coupled with their prayers. So it was in David's case, and in Solomon's case, and in Ezra's case. Read what is written in Holy Scripture of the building of King Solomon—of the timber, the gold, the silver, the workers in brass; the cunning workmen—their number, their skill. Read David's case in his dealings with Araunah—"I will not offer to God of that which doth cost me nothing." Read the history of our Blessed Lord's Body in His burial—which is a kind of type of His Church—of Joseph of Arimathea's care to surround Him profusely with suitable preparations of spices and ointments. Read the accounts of the early churches, both of the East and of the West, wherein kings of every country, and princes, and

nobles, vied with each other as to the greatest and the costliest gifts which they could make for the public worship of their God. We need not speak of these in detail now; only to remind you, that as long as compulsory taxes are set upon a people for the building of God's houses, a hard and reluctant people will answer a hard and reluctant tax with murmurs and complaints; and you will have, as you have had, for the magnificent houses of prayer which are God's due, stinted, mean, and unworthy substitutes, without spirit and without life; and then, as it has been, both the clothing of wrought gold, and the all-glorious beauty within, will equally and simultaneously disappear.

It is then your GIFTS, brethren, and your PRAYERS, that we must ask for this day—of you, the King's daughter, the daughter of Tyre. And will you not, "AS A KING, give unto the King," as David said? free gifts, free offerings, out of the abundance of your heart—not grudgingly, for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver. And not only free gifts as accidental, as made under the pressure of an excitement, or under the influence of momentary persuasion; but habitual and constant, as part of the devotional spirit of a true Christian, and the delight of one who loves God. So saith the learned Hooker: "To honor God with our worldly goods, not only by using them without offence, but by alienating from ourselves some reasonable portion thereof, and by offering up the same to Him, as a sign that we gladly confess His sole and sovereign

dominion over all, is a duty which all men are bound unto, and a part of the very worship of God which the law of God and nature itself requireth. Unless, by a kind of continual tribute, we did acknowledge God's dominion, it may be doubted whether, in a short time, men would not learn to forget whose tenants they are."

On these principles it is, that I would ask you, dearly-beloved brethren, to go on in the tribute of your almsgiving for our church of S. Barnabas. On these principles (of the glory WITHOUT, for the sake of the glory WITHIN), I ask you, for the completion of the good work, to put by something for this "King's palace."

Let your offerings, as the daughter of Tyre, accumulate and heap themselves up into a royal gift, such as becometh so great an object—the service of "Christ's palace" among Christ's Poor.

And forget not your PRAYERS: prayers for our prosperity and final joy, according to His Will—prayers for the blessing of God, that what we have begun we may now complete—prayers for the stability of His Church in these troublous times—prayers that all we may ever do, either clergy or laity, either rich or poor, within the walls of that which is to be His palace—may be as well and equally in "the clothing of wrought gold," as also deeply, and spiritually, and purely, "all glorious within."

SERMON IX.

THE MEDIATION OF JESUS.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON ROGATION SUNDAY, 1850.)

S. JOHN xvii. 24.

“Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me.”

LOOKING carefully along the prayer which occurs in this chapter—the prayer of our Blessed Lord which He said “lifting up His eyes to Heaven”—we shall be immediately struck with its leading characteristic feature. It is a prayer of mediation. Our Lord on many occasions is described as retiring from public gaze to pray. Whole nights, we are told, He occupied in this devotional exercise: on the mountain—in the desert—wheresoever He could, apart from human sight. What the subject of His prayer was, on those occasions, we are not told. They were probably prayers for His own special case—for strength in the hour of temptation—for readiness to suffer—for willingness to do the work of Him that sent Him—for preparation in the last great

struggle. But we know not. Here, however, the words of His prayer are given—a prayer uttered publicly, in the presence of His chosen apostles, and in behalf of those apostles. First, for them He prays; then for those who through them should embrace the faith and become His Church: “Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also who shall believe on Me through their word.”

Then the objects of the prayer are stated: First, that they may be preserved from danger—“Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given me.” Secondly, for unity—“that they may be One as We are.” Thirdly, for sanctification—“Sanctify them through Thy truth.” And Fourthly, for glorification; as in the immediate text—“Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me.”

These are the objects of the prayer; but through all there runs, as I before observed, the peculiar spirit of Mediation. No other person could have uttered such a prayer—no other could have ventured to put forth such grounds of claim for the granting of his prayer. No one could have thus stood as a Daysman* between God and man, and put his hand on both, but Jesus. In this He stands unequivocally revealed the Mediator. In this alone, the peculiarity of the requests made, and the tone in which they are made, and the confidence which

* Job. ix. 33.

breathes throughout that the requests will be heard, are satisfactorily accounted for. It is Jesus mediating for man. It is the Lord, some few hours before His death, standing forth publicly in behalf of His chosen, displaying Himself to man in the commencement of that gracious office on earth, which now He continues to carry on as Intercessor at the Right Hand of the Father, Eternal in the Heavens. How full of thought, both of praise and of thanksgiving, it is, thus to behold the Holy One so interested in our welfare, so anxious for our blessing, so giving Himself entirely to pleading in our behalf before the throne of God! "Great is the hope to which the Lord Jesus raiseth up His people—a hope than which there can be none greater. Be joyful in this hope—because this world is not to be loved, but to be endured; that so ye may be 'patient in tribulation'—even as ye have read in the Gospel, 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.'"

But whence does this hope spring? Let us look to our cleverness and skill. Let us look to our goodness and merit. Let us look to our understanding and reason. Is it from any of these? So much rather not from these, that when we lean on them, or trust them, we fall into endless despair, and a sure foreboding of everlasting wrath. But it is on such comforting words as these—such sure promises—such gracious love: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I

have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me." "Father, *I will* that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me."

Here is some one praying, and that not an ordinary prayer—but "*I will*." And here are persons concerning whom such prayer is made—"Those whom Thou hast given Me." And here is some great One to Whom the prayer is made; in one sense greater than Him Who prays, as otherwise no need of prayer; and yet in another sense Equal, or else not such words as, "*I will*."

And this is Mediation. The mediation of Christ, who prays for us, who cannot pray without Him, to God, Who cannot hear without Him—the Daysman between God and men, God Blessed for evermore.

I. Let us observe the text. First, the remarkable words, "*I will*." It is not suitable, surely, to an ordinary prayer. It is not an expression which could be for a moment endured in the address of a sinner towards his offended Maker: "*I will*." Entreaty, supplication, earnest and long-continued cries, appeals for mercy and forgiveness, these can alone form the subjects of fallen man's addresses to God—and these never could be couched in such an expression as "*I will*." There is a sort of right assumed in it—a claim to be heard on some ground of merit—a certainty that what is said will be attended to—and all this can alone be accounted for under the notion of a mediator.

But what is a mediator? It is this—one who stands as peace-maker between two parties at variance with one another—one who, being on friendly terms with each party, is enabled to hold intercourse with both, which intercourse had otherwise been entirely cut off. Thus we find in the Old Testament that Moses stood in the light of a mediator between God and the Israelites, when the law was delivered on Mount Sinai. The thunder and lightning, and thick clouds of darkness represent Jehovah as a Being too terrible for the Israelites to look upon. Their murmurings and disobedience had so alienated their hearts and their affections from God, that they dared not contemplate Him; and so we find that the whole business of the law was transacted through the mediation of Moses. They said unto Moses (Exod. xx. 19,) “Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” Precisely in the same condition do we, my brethren, stand towards God, and require a mediator in the Gospel. Alienated by nature, and outcast from the pale of mercy, we have neither inclination nor claim to address one word to Almighty God of ourselves. So far the contrary, that we have every reason naturally to avoid Him. We feel our hearts overburdened by a sense of obstinate and perpetually recurring sin. We look upon the pure Presence of the Deity as an object of dread to beings so impure as ourselves. There is a halo of infinite perfection and holiness encircling that Pre-

sence of the Deity, which carries with it to the natural sinner, the awful feelings of justice and wrath, and vengeance and punishment, and we fly from God to hide us even as Adam did, when he heard for the first time, after his disobedience, "the Voice of the Lord God, walking in the midst of the garden."

But that which was impossible to be done, by any intercourse to be established between the two parties themselves, was mercifully brought about by the interposition of a third; that which seemed hopeless, looking to the unspeakable distance which was maintained between the offending and the Offended, became at once endued with a merciful certainty when Jesus Christ, Who was neither the one nor the other, (and yet was both) came into the world and stood between God and man. Being Son of God, He was able to hold converse with the Father, and to enter the heavenly councils with His plea of righteousness all perfect, and obedience performed even unto death; and being Son of man, He was enabled to approach the fallen race to whom He was sent, without the terrors and the dread which seemed otherwise inseparable from the Divine nature of the Godhead; and so we are told, that "there is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus."

II. Hence, then, the peculiar meaning of the words, *I will*; and hence the words which follow: "They whom Thou hast given Me." For it is just

precisely in the same sense of His mediation that Jesus speaks of mankind as "*given to Him.*" Without Christ we are, as it were, lost and abandoned property—of no use to any one, of no value, of no importance. But Jesus Christ interposes. By taking upon Himself the nature of man, and joining Himself to us, teaching, convincing, and finally dying for us, He stipulates with God for the restoration of the lost. He says, as it were, "Permit Me to suffer the penalty due to them. Give them to Me; without Me it is clear that they are useless—nay, that they are a degradation, and a cause of grief and vexation; but give them to Me, and I will die for them, and bring them back. Give them to Me, and they shall be Thine again, restored, made holy and good, even as they were originally." Just so, we read in the Book of Psalms: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Desire of Me, and I shall *give thee* the heathen for thine inheritance." And in S. John iii. 35, "The Father loved the Son, and *gave* all things into His Hand." And in S. John x., "My sheep hear My Voice—My Father Which *gave* them Me is greater than all." And in the same chapter, from which the text is taken—"As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast *given Him.*" It is clear, then, that we are given to Christ through His mediation; that we are not our own, but bought with a price, and then made over to Him to

become His property. The gate of access to God the Father is therefore closed for ever, save through God the Son; we can no longer look upon Him, or pray to Him, or make our request known to Him, except we take Jesus as the Mediator through Whom we communicate. Being given to God the Son, we are His. He is our Shepherd, our Guardian, our Judge, our Saving Protector and Guide, and without Him we are nothing. There can be no question about this. You see it bursting out in every page of Scripture. You cannot, as a Christian, ask a single thing of God the Father, as the Father; you cannot approach Him, speak to Him, or even think of Him, to any effect, save you carry in your hand the plea, which Jesus has given you, of saying—I ask it for Christ's Sake. You cannot look for salvation, you cannot gaze into the bright glories of the future state which awaits the righteous, you cannot hope to be within that glad inclosure which protects the faithful against the attacks of the wolf, unless Jesus be the Shepherd on Whom that hope is rested: "I am the Door," He saith, "I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture," but no otherwise: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

III. But pursue the text still further. What is it that Jesus Christ wills concerning us? "Father, I will, that they also whom Thou hast given Me be

with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me." How many thoughts crowd in here. 1. "*Where I am.*" He is speaking prophetically, and yet He is present. He is speaking of heaven, and yet He is on earth. It is the conjunction of the Divine nature with the human—the Son of God with the Son of man—the Christ with the Word, that Word which was before the worlds were. Even as God said to Moses, "I Am," meaning His eternity; so here Christ says, "I am," as though the future and the present were alike. And yet it is also prophetic, for He speaks it of the disciples, that they *may be* where He, the Son of God, was then; albeit, as Son of man He was speaking to them in the body. And what, brethren, is that place, "*where He is?*" The right Hand of God; the place of intercession; the place of honor. He wants them to be there. He pleads that they may be there. In the mind and the essential Being of His nature, He was there then, and He speaks as being there. Let them come, O Heavenly Father. They are Mine and Mine are Thine, and We are all one with Thee. Let them come, and be with Us. It speaks of His close communion with them. It speaks of His love for them. It speaks of the urgency of His mediation for them.

First, His communion with them. They were inseparably joined with Him on earth; they had followed Him at His call; they had risen up and forsaken all for Him; they had preached His Word

among the people, and worked miracles in His Name; they had been with Him in the city, in the Temple, in the synagogue, in the fields, by the sea-coast, in the desert, on the mountain; and now he prays that they may still be with Him in His Kingdom. This communion on earth must not be broken in heaven. This service and fellowship, begun here, shall be perfected there. "I am with Thee now, O Father, in My Divine nature. I ask of Thee to take them who stand here present in My human nature, and make them present with Me in My Kingdom, that I may see and know them there, and they Me, and that We may be ever One."

Secondly, His love for them. For "greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." This He was about, at that very moment, to do. They could not then comprehend His meaning, but they did afterwards. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," saith God by His prophet—that is, from the foundation of the world. "I have loved thee unto the end," saith S. John—that is, until you come to the mansions which I have prepared, and that end is perfected and attained by the Cross, which now I shall ascend. I am with you now, My chosen, My beloved. I am with you now, in the coming agonies of My Passion. I am with you now, in the glories of My Ascension. Be with Me ever where I am, and "Lo, I am with you always."

And, thirdly, The urgency of His mediation for

them, developed in the great object on which His mind was bent—the glory of His Eternal Godhead —“that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me.” What is this glory? The glory as of the only begotten Son, full of grace and truth—the glory which He had with the Father before the worlds were. The Eternal Father had communicated to the Eternal Son His glory, and now the Eternal Son desires, as the highest object of His mediation, to communicate a vision of that same glory to mankind, as their highest and chiefest blessing; but mankind never could have attained a vision of that glory, or have placed themselves upon any eminence by which they might have been in a condition of obtaining it, without God the Son. What need of His praying, “I will that they may be where I am, and behold My glory,” if they could have been in a condition to behold His glory any other way? In order to partake His glory—in order to share the blessedness of the righteous servants of God, in that heavenly state of perfection and happiness which goes under the peculiar name of “*glory*”—they must be where He is—where Christ is: they must enter the doorway of heaven *with Him*—must ask admittance by the sprinkling of that Blood by which He entered into the Holy of Holies, once for all, and sat down for ever at God’s Right Hand. The expression is, “That they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me,” whereby we

clearly infer, that the glory of the Father, the same glory with which He made the worlds, the same glory with which He endued man at his original creation, perfect, and holy, and good—that same glory will again be communicated to us—a vision of it, a participation and share of it—through the mediation of Christ. *Directly* to us—straight from the fountain of holiness—it cannot come. The two natures of God and man are so utterly averse—man has so disunited himself from the Deity—that from the One to the other no emanation of goodness, or communication of reward, or vision of glory, can proceed in a *direct line*. Like a vessel impregnated with the lees of old and putrescent matter, which has been left there to corrupt in its natural decay—pour into it as you may the fresh sweetness of water from the living fountain, the water is tainted, and is rendered useless by the unfitness of the vessel; so, were the glory of God, and all that is contained in it—purity, beauty, goodness, holiness, perfection, so clear, so transcendent, so unsullied, so bright, that words fail, and thoughts retire confused and dismayed, in its contemplation—were this glory, at once and direct, to come from the throne of grace into the heart of man, it would be only rendered useless, it would only perish in the utter unfitness of the vessel, the tainted vessel which should presume one instant to hold it. There must be a medium for it, there must be an intervening path

or passage, by which the excessive brightness, and the too great opposition of the one to the other, may be reduced: not that God's glory must be rendered less, but that man's state of recipiency must be rendered higher: not that God must infuse into His heavenly Perfection any of the dregs of that earthliness by which man is corrupted, but that man may be enabled to shake off that corruption, and to purify and exalt the degradation in which his soul lies naturally buried.

In short, before any union can take place between two principles at variance with one another, there must be an infusion of some third principle in which a point may be found not so much at variance but that a communication may be looked for. This third principle, this point of communication, this path or passage by which the heart of man is rendered a fit vessel to receive the glory of God, is made by the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is only ours by the mediation of Christ. The glory of God in the highest is brought near to us on earth by the gift of the intervening Spirit Who comes to us through Him, brings Himself (so to speak with reverence) to a level with us, most miserable and degraded as we are, enters into our bodies, and makes them His temple, converses with us, comforts us, cheers us on, guards us, teaches us, pours into our hearts His seven-fold gifts, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of know-

ledge and true godliness, and the spirit of holy fear. This mind, which is the express fruit of the mediation of our Lord, prepares us here for the glory which we shall see hereafter, and enables us to think of God, to meditate on Him; it gives us an instalment, as it were, of that which is to come, a first fruits of the harvest, a sample of the heavenly glory which one day shall be ours, when we really see Him face to face even as He is.

By nature, and in ourselves, it is impossible that we can go into the Presence of God, just as it was impossible for any common Israelite to enter into the Holy of Holies, which was accessible to the high priest alone, and that once a-year, with the victim of sacrifice in his hand. But the high priest so entering was the type of our High Priest, which is Christ, Who enters the Holy of Holies with the victim in His Hand, namely, Himself; and through that interceding, brings us into God's very Presence by the Spirit. Then the impossibilities of nature are conquered by the possibilities of grace, and our Blessed Lord, taking us by the hand, shows us such glorious issues of His cross and passion as it entereth not now into our hearts to conceive.

And this is the meaning of the prayer of mediation which runs throughout the chapter now before us. "I have given them THY word." "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee,

that they also may be one *in Us*," and "The glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as We are One. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one."

IV. But, my brethren, we must hasten to make an inference from all this—an inference of the most serious practical importance.

Let it be granted that you desire as a Christian to inherit the glory of Almighty God, and let it be granted that your only way of doing so is by the mediation of Jesus; but you will observe from this text that the mediation of Jesus will not be yours as a matter of course; Jesus uses His mediating office in intercessional prayer in behalf of His chosen—in behalf of those whom He loves—in behalf of those for whom He has died. He urgently desires it of God the Father. He wills that they may be saved, He wills that they may behold His glory. But who are these chosen, and these whom He loves, and for whom He has died? He tells us as He prays, "*They whom Thou hast given Me.*" To be, then, the subjects of this glory, we must be the subjects of this prayer; and to be the subjects of this prayer, we must be given to Christ; the Holy Spirit must reign in our hearts and lives; we must be dedicated and given to Christ, in our bodies and in our spirits, which are His; the faith of Jesus must rule and govern the whole course of our moral conduct in this world of sin; in short, we must be abstracted from the world and given to

Him. The question, then, for you is this:—Are you really given to Christ? See the consequence if you are—see the consequence if you are not. If you are not—if all you know of Christ is the mere profession of outward lips, and the mere repetition of His Name, by an external putting on of the dress and semblance of Christianity—if when you read of the mighty works which have been done of God in the history of His dealings with man, all that follows is a mere assent of the understanding—if when you hear in the voice of the preaching of Jesus, that preaching which tells you of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and of the patient meekness, and the lowly contentment, and the willing death of that Son of God for your sake alone, yet you move not, are not warned, are not stimulated, are not aroused from the deadness of your nature, still sluggish, still obtuse, still hard and cold, then have you nothing in common with the glory of God. You may talk indeed of the glory of God, but it is a thing which speaks not to you in return, which presents no aspect of enjoyment, which has no price or value in your estimation, and, therefore, you cannot have it. You have not placed yourself, or prayed that you may be placed, among the possessions of Christ. You are not His, and you cannot have His glory. Take the world and enjoy it; be its servant and its slave; fulfil what it sets before you; revel in its delights. Verily you have your reward. But it is here, not there where Christ is,

at the right Hand of God; it is here, indeed, with its splendor and its pomp—here with its ambition and its things of high estate—here with its lands and houses, its successes and its triumphs; but when this has passed away, when three-score years and ten have done their work, when you sit down to contemplate the dark mountains, and the things of this glory begin to take a shapeless and a shadowy form, as though, indeed, you could hardly discern even in the memory, what they have been; what then? A blank and dreary prospect—a vain, dim emptiness—you are nothing, you have had your reward.

But if you *are* given to Christ; if your heart, your affections, all the movements and impulses of your mind are His—emanating from His peculiar teaching, guided by His peculiar graces, and depending upon His peculiar merits; if the flesh, and the world, and the natural man are, by the Holy Spirit, altogether set aside as unworthy your possession, and you can safely and conscientiously say, that you are Christ's—that you are given to Him—then, whatever may be the aspect of affairs here—however the world may turn aside from you, as one out of its pale, as one unsuited to its privileges, and incapable of its glories, you need not give it heed, for you may look in confidence to *higher* privileges, and *higher* glories, in the kingdom of God. To you no matter, then, that the scoffer and the jester speak against you; that fame and reputation

among men are from you withheld; that you meet with nothing but tribulation and vexation of spirit in things earthly; that the results of your abstinence and self-denial end only in the laughter of the wicked, and all the sincere struggles you make against the Evil One terminate only in fresh additions to your toil, and renewed trials for your watchfulness. To you no matter, because you are sensible throughout that you are "*given to Christ*;" that it is for His Sake, in His Name, by His Merits, and by His Grace that all is done; you are content to esteem all things but as dung, so that you may win Christ; you are content to say, nay you rejoice to say—"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord."

Being, then, where He is here, you will be where He is hereafter. Being where He is on earth, in purity, in holiness, in prayer, in patience, in suffering; if needs be, you will be also where He is at the right hand of God's Throne in heaven. All that is earthly, corrupt, and degraded about you will be cast off; (it will be very greatly cast off, even while your present body remains); but it will be finally cast off—it will be eternally cast off, when your earthly house of this tabernacle is laid down in death, and you are clothed upon with that house which is eternal in the heavens. Then will the brightness of the glory of God shine forth to you, as the Apostle says—"in the Face of Jesus Christ;"

and that glory will be yours; then shall the veil of flesh be taken away, (which veil is unavoidable, while you look upon God of *yourself*); it shall be taken away, and you will be one with Christ, therefore one with God. "With open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, you shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

SERMON X.

“THINGS THAT CANNOT BE BORNE.”

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON WHITSUN-EVE, 1850.)

S. JOHN xvi. 12.

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you unto all Truth.”

WHAT deep thoughts float in upon the mind from this announcement! Our Blessed Lord, desirous to tell His apostles “many things,” and yet not doing so. The apostles whose minds (we should have thought) from long intercourse with their Divine Master, fully competent to listen to His teaching, yet here pronounced incompetent. “Ye cannot bear them now.” Another and a better time alluded to—better than even when our Lord Himself stood among them. “Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth shall come, He shall guide you unto all truth.”

How can this be? Just as in the ordinary processes of life—our trades, professions, arts, sciences—there are certain deeper mysteries into which

men are unfit and incapable of penetrating, until they have been trained, and gradually led from teaching to teaching. So in the sacred things of our faith, it would seem that we are not able all at once to receive everything. We must advance slowly and warily. "New wine must not be put into old bottles, lest the bottles burst and the wine perish." There are things which must not be told to all, "lest we cast our pearls before swine." Men sometimes cannot *bear* the holier things of God. They are like the sun's bright rays, which, if let in suddenly on one just restored from blindness, will only make the blindness greater—not gratify, but destroy—not edify, but bewilder and confuse.

May we then in Christianity keep back any part of God's truth? May we as Christ's ambassadors refuse to give forth all we know, or all we believe, to the indiscriminate multitude? Is not that something like confining the free Word of God, limiting His gifts, and cramping His powers? It might seem so at first sight—yet it is not really so. No more so than when we have babes, we feed them with milk; and when they become men, we feed them with strong meat. The strong meat given at first would kill—not nourish. The babes would not be able to bear it, and would die. So there are babes in Christianity, and these babes must first be tended gently and lovingly; they must be taught and guided; there must be a little first, and then more; and then the final consummation, when they

be ready to receive it. And this leads us into several trains of thought.

I. How many things we (all of us) may be losing, just because we are unable to bear them.

II. How the Spirit of truth is necessary for the full development of God's Blessing, so as to **ENABLE** us to bear them.

Let us look round about us and watch those who go about the streets, those who come in and go out of our Churches, those who form part of our own families. Let us watch our own hearts. What a difference there is! Behold *here*, what a gross, hard, carnal heart, how delighting, like swine, to walk in mire—how nothing moves him—how he goes on from day to day in one ungodly career of sin—besotted, obstinate, perverse. See round about and near him, loving parents who have in vain taught—holy Priests who have in vain admonished—the House of God which throws its holy shadow down before his very feet, and all that is goodly and beautiful set before him for practice, and all in vain. The charmers charm very wisely; but he is like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears. Behold there again—what a hard heart of unbelief! Faith shut out! Truths which could subdue and command the whole world without conviction. Evidences which might be palpable in the things of daily life, not perceived. The creation of the world—God's providence—His word—the law and the prophets—Jesus the Messiah—the wonderful works which

He did—His preaching—His holy Life—His Death—His Resurrection—read, heard of, but not believed—intellect coming in where faith was asked for; and reason urged where trust and love were needed. A Pharaoh who witnessed the miracles of Moses, and perished in the Red Sea—a Simon Magus, who thought to make profit, and was accursed of God—an Ananias and Sapphira, who thought to gain credit for alms, and were smitten with death—a Gallio, who cared for none of these things—an Agrippa, who saw and heard, and was moved, and yet withal was only *almost* a Christian, never altogether: S. Chrysostom describes these, commenting on the infinite varieties and shades of the human mind in infidelity and rejection of the things of God. Some things there are in Holy Scripture, which unbelieving men, when they read or hear, understand not; and having read or heard, cannot *bear*—as the Pagans: that He Who was Crucified is the Same by Whom the world was made—as the Jews, that He is the Son of God Who broke the Sabbath—as the Sabellians, that Father and Son and Holy Spirit are a Trinity—as the Arians, that the Son is Equal with the Father, and the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son—as the Photinians, that Christ is not only Man like unto us, but also God Equal unto God the Father—as the Manichees, that Christ Jesus, through Whom we must be delivered, deigned to be born in flesh and of flesh. And so with all the men of perverse and

diverse sects—why, of course they cannot bear whatever is found in Holy Scripture, and in the Catholic faith, that may be brought forward against their errors, just as *we* cannot bear their sacrilegious vanities and lying ravings.

And yet, brethren, to them all—both to the sinners in the one case, and to the various shades of unbelievers in the other—Jesus the Blessed of God—His holy Words—His chosen Apostles—the preaching of the Church, were all present equally and alike. Why was it that they were not moved—that sin remained sin—unbelief remained unbelief? Why, but merely for this: “They could not bear the things which were told them.” And why could they not bear them? Because the Spirit of Truth had not come to them. They had either rejected, or they had given no heed to Him; and so the Spirit of Truth had not guided them unto all truth.

Now, just exactly so may it be with us. Here is God’s Word—here is His Church—here His Preachers—here His Sacraments—present, just as our Blessed Lord was present with the Apostles; but what He said to them was dark and hidden—they did not understand, so we do not understand.

Here is a great mystery: that by water in holy Baptism is given a regenerating and life-creating grace—that by water we go down into the font foul and leprous, by grace we rise pure, spotless, and sound—that by water we go down into the font dead in trespasses and sin, by grace we rise up

from the font alive in Christ. This is a mystery; and you, my brethren, cannot believe it. It is one of those many things which Christ has in Him, but does not give you yet, because you are unable to bear it. It is a great mark of inconsistency, to say the least of it, in those who deny the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, to urge forward into prominence the Calvinistic doctrine of compulsory grace, irrespective of Sacraments. It is quite intelligible that the Rationalist and the general unbeliever should repudiate such a doctrine, because they are utterly outside the idea of Divine grace altogether. But it is strange, that when the Calvinist supposes the Divine Spirit to enter man's soul by invisible means, he should limit the Divine Spirit when supposed to come by visible means. Why allow the greater and deny the less? And so it is strange in us who, according to the Church, believe of necessity that any child baptized with water, in the name of the Holy Trinity, is regenerate of the Spirit, that we should have to turn round upon the Calvinist, and say, "You are but a babe; you are but an incipient novice in your notion of the Spirit of God. You cannot believe what the Church believes, because God has not revealed it to you *yet*. It is one of the things that the Blessed Son of God cannot give you, because you cannot bear it *now*. It is a deeper mystery than your carnal eyes can dare investigate. You are blinded by its beauty; you are staggered by its glory; and therefore,

imitating our Blessed Lord, we must not thrust it forward."

How much, indeed, may have been lost by this unwise protruding of so holy a mystery. Might it not have been better for the Church had the agitation of its question been suffered to slumber and be at rest awhile longer? The whole of the population out of the pale of the Church reject it openly—a majority of those within the nominal Church equally repudiate it—a very small portion accept it cordially and free from any stain of heresy—even the clergy, in great numbers, having subscribed deliberately to its faith, and bound themselves by the solemnity of laying-on of hands, to preach it as the Church's unquestioned teaching, even those very men, in considerable numbers, saying the office of the Church, according to its laws, in the baptism of children, wherein every prayer and action teaches it, even these are found still to explain it away, to weaken it, to compromise it, to deny it. What a fearful thing this is! And yet the Church will have to speak in charity to these holding their private judgments against her decrees and canons. She will have to speak to these, and say, "It is enough: let us not contradict each other, nor enter into the bitterness of controversy. Let us be silent. The Church has this holy doctrine safe in her keeping, testified by eighteen centuries. But we had better speak no more of it, for you cannot bear it now. When you have learned to submit the

private opinion of a child to the teaching of a mother—when you have learned that mysteries are out of man's reach as matters of understanding, and must of necessity be dealt with on the principles of faith—when you have given up yourselves, and have wholly followed Christ—then, may be, the Church's doctrine will be revealed to you. Let us be silent, and wait God's time for God's truth. You cannot bear it now."

With the same notion, let us turn from the Baptismal mystery to the Eucharistic. It is the doctrine of the Church, among many other points of holy teaching, that the bread and the wine used in that Blessed Sacrament becomes to the faithful the very Body and the very Blood of our Blessed Lord; and so become in consequence of the consecration made over them, in the words of institution of our Saviour, "This is My Body"—"This is My Blood." It is the doctrine of the Church, that this sacred Body and Blood of Christ imparts grace, nourishes the soul, feeds it with heavenly food, is its sacrifice and atonement for sin, is its guard, protector, strength, and any virtue which our Lord Himself could be, were He to be alive again upon the earth. It is the doctrine of the Church that, without such nourishment, the death of the soul follows, even as the death of the body without natural food. It is a mystery. And you may-be listen to such an announcement as to an idle tale: you do not take it in: it is nothing to you. It is, may-be, worse

than nothing—a subject of profane criticism, or a wicked jest.

But why do men reject this doctrine? For two main reasons: because it is an offence to intellect, and because it is an offence to sin. It is an offence to intellect to be told that what we see, touch, and taste, is more, incomparably more, than the evidence of these senses will allow us to take in; and men formed in the continual habit of relying on themselves as judges of what is put before them, and always making that judgment on the evidence of sense, will not entertain any idea that seems to go beyond that sense, because they think that it is an infraction of their own sagacity and wisdom. Let us observe a difference between saying “go beyond” that sense, and “contradict” that sense. Have you thought how fatal such an argument is to the being of a Christian’s faith in the veriest fundamentals. Our Blessed Lord in the flesh was to the senses Son of man, and no more; for this reason, because He was to the eye, the touch, the hearing, a human creature. So the Jewish nation, wanting in faith, denied Him. But was He more than met the eye, the touch, the hearing, or was He not? If not, then the faith of Christ is gone, for the faith of Christ rests for its very essence on the Divine nature of the Son of God, incorporated with the human nature of the Son of the Blessed Virgin. But if our Saviour, in the flesh, was more than the flesh, then something is

believed concerning Him more than meets the senses. Why not apply that which we believe of our Blessed Lord Himself, in His Person, to that which He says of Himself in Sacramental word? It is just the very coming in of faith beyond the senses that brings the failure; and tested thus closely and honestly, we find the reason of the denial of the real Eucharistic presence—*want of faith*; men cannot bear it yet.

But it is also an offence against SIN. How many live in sin, if not habitual or mortal, still in accidental and occasional sin, unrepented and unremitted! They care not concerning it. To present themselves, then, before the Holy Table mere memorialists of that which has taken place in ages past—to make a mere record of a past transaction, in which fortuitously they may have a share as to its beneficial effects—cannot be injurious, and is certain to be decent as a confirming mark of ordinary good-feeling, testifying that they agree with their brethren. It is quiet—it is passive—it is a mere official duty. But present to such a man the doctrine, that when in an unprepared, unholy, unchaste, unabsolved body, such as he must bring before the Holy Altar, out of the impure and ungodly company of the world, which he has just left for a Sunday morning, and will return to in the Sunday evening; present to such an one the doctrine that he eats and drinks, and incorporates with himself, the Flesh of Christ, the very

Body of His Lord, even as we pray, "that we may so eat THE FLESH of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, and drink HIS BLOOD;" present that doctrine, so wonderful, and so awful, simply and at once before his mind, and such a man is shocked. He will not relinquish his practice, but he will reject the doctrine. He rejects it, because he cannot bear it yet. Then do not let us force it. Do not let us be surprised at the unwillingness of the world to receive it. Rather let us shrink back with our Lord, and wait a little longer. I would say to you, brethren, if you cannot embrace this higher standard of the faith, examine yourselves as to the two questions now suggested. At present your mind is locked up by some hardness of sophistry, or puzzled by some bewilderment of curiosity; your heart is gross in some foulness of sin—your whole self is polluted. Of course, then, you cannot bear the entertainment of so awful a mystery now: "Holy things to holy men." By and by we may speak to you of such a matter, *but you cannot bear it now.*

Again, this is a great mystery. The wife is joined to the husband, and they two become one flesh. She is bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. She is one with him, and not separate from him, nor can be. But I speak, saith the Apostle, concerning Christ and His Church. It is the Church, which is flesh of Christ's Flesh, and bone of Christ's Bone. There is in them a great and marvellous incorporation, and oneness and identity, and we cannot tear

the one from the other; and he that would do so, that would rend and tear that oneness, commits a deadly sin; and so we pray, "from heresy and schism, Good Lord deliver us." And yet, an Anabaptist, a Wesleyan, an Independent, and such like, cannot see this mystery, neither desires after this oneness, nor thinks it sinful to rend it. Why is this? It is one of the things which Christ has not yet revealed to their hearts. It is one of the many things which He in His mercy and love bears about with Him daily, and, as He walks among them, longs to reveal it; but somehow they cannot bear it yet. And this accounts for the reckless and harsh treatment that the Church, as the Body of Christ, is continually receiving at the hands of the world. The governments of the world hate the Church, because the Church is opposed to them. The world is always said to be the enemy of the Church, and the Church the enemy of the world, naturally so. There is ever a contest between them; and the reason soon appears. The mystery of the Incorporation—the mystery of the junction of the Church with Christ: if there were no such mystery, there could be no such opposition of the world. In proportion as the Church amalgamates with the governments of the world, is subject to statesmen, and bows before Princes, accords with their habits, and is satisfied with their smiles—so is it loose and apart from the mystery of its incorporation with Christ. The world does not hold

this idea. Governments will not accept it. Then we must not be too quick, or too sudden, in broaching it as the doctrine of Christ—we must wait. Patience must do its work; we must be content that it shall be held in abeyance. Men “*cannot bear it now.*” So with the schism of the Catholic Church. We behold all Christendom rent asunder: diverse doctrines—diverse discipline—diverse faith; men hating each other—separating—not worshipping in the same fold—not subject to the same Bishop—each with his own Creed, and his own interpretation: England here, Rome there—the West holding itself aloof from the East, and the East denying the authority of the West: yet our Blessed Lord’s prayer for unity is one of the most touching appeals that He ever made to His disciples. His love, great as it was, never shines forth so singularly intense and deep as when He contemplates their union; His grief never so severe as when He anticipates their separation. Why, then, can we not fulfil His commands—comply with His wishes, and rush into each others’ arms in forgetfulness of all these miserable heart-rending decisions? We cannot bear it *yet*. There is much to learn before this great blessing comes. It seems as though there were many sufferings to be borne, and much tribulation to be encountered, before that blessed day arrives. We must not be too fast, or go before the counsels of the Lord. He knows us better than we know ourselves. He sees that although among

a few this rending of the flock is a grievous burden, still it is so only to a few. Our sins will not let us draw closer yet. There is more to be done—*“we cannot bear it now.”*

On the whole, these are awful thoughts, even as I said. So much that is beautiful and good around us, such high privileges, such noble schemes for our blessing, and yet we, as a people and a Church, having no knowledge of them, God being of necessity, so to speak, compelled to withhold His many gifts, by reason of our general incapacity to receive them; that incapacity (when traced back to its real source) arising from our sins.

I would ask you, how does it come to pass that there is this difference in two men, that one believes so much, the other nothing—one accepts with a docile mind all that is taught, another rejects it—one is on his knees daily, by night and by day, praying, the other is not found to make the offering of his lip-service even once a-week—the one all heart, all zeal, all love, the other all coldness, obtuseness, and death?

The answer is given at this holy time, it is given by the words of the text, “Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you unto all truth.”

As it was to the Church and the Apostles, so it is to each individual. At the time our Lord spoke these words, the Church was not ready, in fact there was no Church. The Apostles were not

ready, the Jews, the Gentiles, the whole world was not ready, to receive the sublime truths and mysteries of the Christian Faith, until the descent of the Holy Ghost. The Apostles did, indeed, see somewhat, just sufficient to follow, but they saw dimly and obscurely; they saw men like trees walking; they knew only in part, they did not see face to face. Peter said he could die with Christ, but he was not able. The three, Peter, James, and John, wanted to make a tabernacle for Christ in the mystery of the Transfiguration, but they knew not what they said. The two disciples at Emmaus walked and conversed with our Blessed Lord, and knew Him not; and yet afterwards the whole Church was taught of God; not only men and women, but boys and girls, young men and virgins, confessed the faith, and died for the faith, crowned with martyrdom; and the sheep were found able to bear what the shepherds could not.

What was the difference? "THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH" had come upon those latter days. The Comforter—the Teacher—the Paraclete—He had shed over the whole Church a different light. What was unintelligible before, now became clear and manifest. Mountains were brought low, valleys were lifted up; the rough places were made smooth, and the highways clear; and the great mysteries of the faith, before reserved and hidden, were spread over the Church in a beautiful and spacious light.

So to you, my brethren, individually, some may

have come here to-night without much regard as to what they are to learn, or what they are to believe; while others may have come with a loose and indefinite kind of belief, not caring much for the holy things of God either one way or another; while others, again, may have a very thirsting and eager desire to learn and know all things, but find they cannot, being pressed down and hindered by some obstacles, over which they have neither control nor power. To all, then, in their degree it has been as yet the Voice of the Lord Jesus, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them *now*." You have not the fulness and assurance of faith; you do not see; you do not understand; you do not appreciate; you do not practise.

Well, are you to despair? Are you who have no faith at all, who are quite abroad and at sea, to go out of the Church to-night as dead and as listless as you came in? Are ye who have a thirsting desire for faith, and yet find no place to satisfy it, to go away as unhappy and as unsatisfied as ye have been hitherto? Not so. For why, my brethren, have ye come? Not only to hear the former words, but the latter also: "When the Spirit of Truth will come, He will guide you unto all truth."

And why to-night? Because to-morrow He will come. As on the Apostles to guide them to truth, so upon you. It is the Feast of Pentecost. If things are hard to you, and "ye cannot bear them

now," they will cease to be hard, if in the privileges of your Christianity you ask of God for the Spirit of Truth. Do you hear of mysteries which you do not understand, and cannot accept now? Is the Sacramental system, and the Church system, and the mysteries of the faith generally, and things that you do not know, nor understand, are they hidden from you, and made difficult and embarrassing? Wait; they will become very intelligible, plain, and easy, if in the privileges of your Christianity you ask of God for the "Spirit of Truth."

Do you hear of precepts, and of holy rules of discipline, prayers and fastings, self-denials and watchings, and ye cannot bear them *now*? They will become not only very bearable, but very beautiful, if you do but ask of God in prayer that "the Spirit of Truth may come."

On the one hand, I would not have you despair; on the other, I would not have you be presumptuous. As you are at present, you feel that you are very short of the many higher things that you read and hear of in the faith and conduct of others. The very fact of your possessing this feeling is the beginning of grace for your attaining them. Humility of mind, in comparing yourself with some higher standard of religious privileges, and consciousness of the shortcoming which appears on the comparison, is a comforting sign. You are just in the state which God loves to see. You are *waiting*; and although it may be in His better knowledge of

you that as yet no higher graces shall be bestowed upon you, remember that it is solely out of mercy that they are withheld. You cannot bear them *now*; but that is no reason why you should not bear them ere long; and, according to your ability to bear them, so will He give them to you.

On the other hand, be not presumptuous, and imagine that because you have a confessed deficiency in the things of God, it matters little, since it all depends on *Him*; and if He, seeing that you cannot bear them now, does not give them, it is no fault of yours. Surely you cannot *wish* to be left either in your sins or in your faithlessness; you cannot but desire to know more than you do, to believe more than you do, to practise more than you do.

I cannot conceive it possible but that, in whatever state you are, you have a wish to make an advance; and whatever things you have not as yet been called to achieve, you do desire to achieve and to perfect.

Then this is the time to ask this gift. It is the time when the Blessed Son of God, having ascended on high, and leading captivity captive, received gifts for men. "You cannot," He says, "go unto the Father, except the Father Who sent Him draw you." This gift He has ready—this gift of being "drawn unto God"—this gift of truth.

You may be prejudiced, you may be blind, you may be in error, you may be in schism, you may

be in sin; whatsoever it be, you want truth and to-morrow the "Spirit of Truth" may, at the earnest request of your prayers, "guide you unto all truth." May it please God, of His infinite mercy, so to do for us all.

Many truths are gainsaid now—many of Christ's holy mysteries, many of Christ's holy doctrines: let us pray this night, let us pray specially to-morrow at the holy Eucharist, that it may please God to send, both upon His Church and upon ourselves, things which we do not seem able to bear *now*, but may-be shall, when it shall please God to make another Pentecost, revive the Church, guide our bishops, sanctify our priests, bless our people, and lead "US UNTO ALL TRUTH."

SERMON XI.

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S ON TRINITY SUNDAY, 1850—THE DAY OF
ORDINATION.)

S. MATTHEW xxviii. 18-20.

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in Earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

WHEN our Blessed Lord was upon earth, He observed (according to His Mission from God the Father) that the multitudes were perishing round about Him—sometimes for lack of sustenance in the body, sometimes for lack of sustenance in the soul; and in both cases He was “moved with compassion.”

Thus S. Matthew says: “When He saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.” Then saith

He to the disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers unto His harvest."

Under this impression, He gathered together a little company. Several followed Him from city to city, and from village to village. Several followed Him, and hung upon His words, and beheld His wonderful works; and of them He chose twelve, whom He named Apostles; and He sent them forth whithersoever He would, to teach the ignorant, comfort the distressed, preach the glad tidings of redemption, and turn men unto God in repentance. But no Baptism then; no mention of the Holy Trinity then. It was simply PREACHING, in order to reclaim.

Then, further on, moved with the same compassion again, He chose seventy; and those He sent in like manner, two and two, into every city and village, whithersoever He Himself would come; and, what is remarkable, with the same observation as before: "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few." But still no Baptism, no Sacrament, nothing but Preaching, in order to reclaim.

You will not fail to observe in this, the order and the method in which our Blessed Lord proceeds. It was not in Him any vague or accidental enthusiasm of the moment, which spent itself in isolated attempts in doing good in one place, or

in another place—in one way, or in another way—as He was moved by the casual wants of those around Him. “*Moved with compassion*” He was; but that compassion was directed into a systematic arrangement and disposal of the power within Him, in order to bless the creatures whom He came to save. He came to save them—that was the end; but the end was to be brought about by certain *means*. Those means He regulated according to the end. Those means He devised and planned with foresight, calculation, order, and regularity (if we may reverently use those terms in speaking of the Son of God). I repeat, He devised the means for furnishing the famishing multitudes around Him, with method—choosing out those whom He saw most adapted to the work, enduing them with power suited to the work, and giving them missions to such places as needed the work; not one now, and one then, but only on these two occasions, and then in two remarkable numbers—twelve, to agree with the tribes—seventy, to agree with the judges appointed by Moses; and these two numbers differently—the seventy with the mere designation of *disciples*, the twelve with the higher designation of APOSTLES.

But observe something further. Here was the Gospel at work—perishing multitudes in every city—perishing multitudes in every village—the seventy, here and there, two by two—the twelve apostles, here and there, two by two. They were

the appointed ministers for preaching that Gospel, and saving those multitudes. They were laboring according to their vocation, and bringing within the net of the kingdom of heaven both good and bad, from every region round about. But what would they have been without some director and guide? How would they have worked in all the different places whither they were sent, so as to bring about an uniformity of faith, upheld by the same principles, teaching the same doctrines, and leading men unto salvation by the same road, unless they had come forth from one common Head themselves, and had that common Head constantly in view, and were governed and ruled in their teaching by a reference to that one common Head and Source of their authority? Now, this Head was Jesus Christ. "He was the Head of the body—the Church."

Here, then, you have, during the life of our Blessed Lord (as, of course, it must be considered) the pattern and example of the way "*to preach the Gospel*;" namely, one directing head, with commissioned men in subordinate authority, moving as from one common centre, into every "region round about."

But the time was to come when our Lord Himself, as the living Director and Governor of the Church, was to withdraw from the world. The time was to come when the twelve and the seventy were to be left alone, as far as *visibly* beholding

their Head. But would that have been a perfect system of imparting the bread of life to perishing multitudes for ever, which would cease with the life of Him Who came to bring it? Were there not perishing multitudes, hungering and thirsting for salvation, and knowing not where to find it—not only in Galilee and Judea, but in the remoter regions of a world which the apostles had never even heard of—a world which had yet to be called into existence, a world of souls which were not then born, but had to be born, and had to be brought up in all the vain idolatry and sinfulness of heathenism? What a little speck upon the face of the world is Judea! What a little moment of time were those three years in which Jesus Christ Himself presided as the personal and visible Head of His appointed Church! If it had to cease there, either in time or space, it had been nothing. No! that which we see our Lord beginning, we should naturally expect to see Him continuing and perfecting; and, accordingly, we find Him, previous to His final departure, solemnly arranging that it shall continue. Look at the words of the text. It was just before His Ascension. The eleven apostles, who had been chosen by Him as the associates of the Divine work, and preachers of His Divine Word throughout His life, these eleven (one only missing, who had gone to his own place) He solemnly calls before Him, and thus addresses:—"All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye

therefore and teach *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Why say all this now? Had He not sent them forth before? Had He not made them His preachers and ministers in the first apostolic commission? Yes. But in this there was something further. That was a commission as subordinate ministers of His will during His own life. This was evidently a *new* commission, imparting further power than before. What could that power be? Why, to take His place now as Rulers and Directors of the Church. To take His place (subordinate still unto Himself as in Heaven), but as first and chief moving directors and organizers of His Church upon earth, so that what He had begun in Himself might never want the means of continuance throughout all subsequent ages. And so He continues, as the reason of this fresh authority, and winds it up thus, making it perpetual, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" as much as to say thus, True, I am now departing from you; you will see Me here no more. I have done the work which My Father gave Me to do. I have founded the Church, ordained teachers, planted My doctrines, have lived for an Example, and died for a Sacrifice; and now I depart—but I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. I will not leave you alone upon the earth. I will be with you, though

not visibly and personally, still invisibly and sacramentally. I leave you in My place as representatives and successors. You shall have the same power as I have had; as My Father hath sent Me, so send I you. As My Father gave Me power and jurisdiction to organize, choose, and ordain, so I give you this power, and not to you only, or during your lives, but to others also after you. You are to appoint others to succeed you, as I have appointed you to succeed Me; so shall this governing power continue, so shall a vital principle be implanted in the Church, which cannot be extinguished. Remain in Jerusalem until you shall be "endued with power from on high." That power shall be sent in the miraculous descent of the Comforter, Whom I have promised. Remain here until that event takes place. Then go forth—teach all nations—continue that which I have begun in you, by sending out branches and offshoots from yourselves unto every known region of the world. "Lo," in this sense, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

But time advanced. The Apostles, thus endued with governing, and ordaining, and expanding power, and strengthened by the accession of S. Matthias, and S. Paul, and S. Barnabas, went forth Apostles, even as Christ had commanded, and "preached the gospel to every creature." They had presbyters or elders under them, as we read in several places of the Acts, as one subordinate order, and deacons as another subordinate order, but they

remained in the apostolic body superior over the others, directing and governing; the spirit of which we see from the epistles which they wrote to many of the Churches which they founded.

But time advanced. The close of the first century approached. By degrees the Apostles were taken to their place of rest. What then was to become of the promise of Christ, "Lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world"? There surely must be some similar governing body appointed to succeed the Apostles, when the Apostles themselves should depart. Neither the seventy disciples, presbyters, or deacons, could take upon themselves to preside over the Churches; S. James was head of the Church of Jerusalem, S. Peter at Rome, S. Paul over the various Gentile Churches, Corinthian, Galatian, and others. But were they all to be left without any governing body, when these holy men should depart and be gathered to their rest?—were they to have no head, no ruling guide? Surely this could not be. Therefore you find that the Apostles took measures, according to their Saviour's command, to maintain and continue this governing body over the Church, similar to that which they themselves enjoyed. Out of the presbyters in the different Churches they chose eminent men to be *chief presbyters*, presbyters who might be endued with certain powers beyond the other presbyters, to whom should be confided the power of ordaining others by laying on of hands,

and a general superintendence of the affairs of the Church. These presbyters thus selected were called overseers, or bishops. The word overseer, or bishop, had indeed been used before indiscriminately with the word elder, as we find in the address of S. Paul to the elders of Miletus; He speaks of them as overseers over the flock of Christ; and so every presbyter was, in a sense, head or overseer of each particular flock or congregation; but now, at the Apostles' departure, they took this word and made it the distinguishing mark of the chief presbyters. The chief presbyters, then, *i.e.*, those who were to preside, govern, and ordain, as distinguished from those who were not to preside, govern, or ordain, were from this time called bishops, as their distinguishing title. They were to represent the Apostles, after the departure of the Apostles, each one governing in his own Church, even as the Apostles had been appointed to succeed Christ, thus maintaining the idea of unity. All the Churches were one under their Invisible Head, the Lord Jesus Christ; and each several Church was one, under its particular bishop; and all the bishops in their several Churches were to elect, from time to time, one chief presbyter to succeed another, and become bishop of his church, as they might severally die off—in the same way as Christ Himself had appointed the Apostles, and the Apostles had appointed the first bishops; and thus it became true, that "Christ was, and is, and will

be, with His Church even unto the end of the world."

Now, all this you will find exemplified by a reference to Scripture and early Church history. In Scripture you find S. Paul selecting Titus, and appointing him a bishop at Crete, and Timothy at Ephesus; and you find him, in his epistles to those bishops, speaking to them of their especial and peculiar duty as bishops, as to ruling the Church, (1 Tim. iii. 5; and 1 Tim. v. 19); and as to ordaining, "Lay hands suddenly on no man," (1 Tim. v. 22); and more particularly in reference to a continued succession—"The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also," (2 Tim. ii. 2); and more particularly still in the epistle to Titus—the governing and ordaining power is specially mentioned there as the cause of his appointing him a bishop: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee," (Titus i. 5).

Leaving Holy Scripture, we find, in Church history, Erodus, Bishop of Antioch, Linus and Clemens, successively bishops of Rome; and from them a line unbroken, extending to the present time—Epaphroditus, bishop of Philippi, and many others. All the Fathers speak of the great necessity of this high office in the most glowing and affectionate terms. Thus Ignatius says, "Your

celebrated presbytery, worthy of God, is as closely knit to the bishop as strings to a harp; and so, by means of your unanimity and concordant love, Jesus Christ is sure." And S. Cyprian describes a bishop as being "as necessary as a shepherd to the flock, a pilot to a ship, and a ruler among the people; for, as a flock cannot be fed without a shepherd, a ship steered without a pilot, nor a multitude kept in order without a governor, so neither can a Church be kept in order without a bishop."

But why do I speak of these things to-day? Because on this day, according to the invariable usage of the Church throughout the world, the episcopal office peculiar to itself is being exercised by laying-on of hands in ordination. Because, as you know, my brethren, it is our custom to provide for the wants of our local harvest among the poor by your offerings for the Curate's Fund,* corresponding with this day. How wonderful this is! For eighteen centuries—season after season—bishops succeeding bishops, and bishops succeeding apostles, and apostles succeeding Christ, without change or break; and now the stream still continued unbroken—undiminished—still flowing on—never ceasing—and here for us, and for you, pastors and ministers of the Word, with authority, even as at the first!

What a description this is! How it ought to

* It was the custom to provide Curates of the Parish by the offerings of the people made at the four Holy Seasons of Ordination.

cheer us. How it ought to be an argument of confidence in the midst of the greatest distractions. How it ought, as our Lord's special promise, (if believed,) to stablish, settle, unite the discordant elements under which now we seem well nigh to perish. It is true that individual Churches—that is, Churches of this or that country—have failed in carrying on the work of the Apostolic ministry: as the Churches of Africa, entirely cut off and gone, though once containing the choicest of the flowers of Christendom; as too many Churches in Greece, and many in the East, lost in heresy, and dying, out of seeming inanition—forewarned in the Apocalypse of S. John, but forewarned in vain. And so it may be true with Churches yet alive, that they may, although having once been Churches, cease so to be, and die; as may our own, through corruption, through lukewarmness, through heresy, and abandoning of the Catholic faith. For there is nothing contained in the promise, “Lo, I am with you always,” that involves of necessity an application to every *local* Church. It is sufficient, if it be safely applied to the Universal Church: *Somewhere* I will be with you always. And there is this necessary circumstance to be considered, that if we are not with Christ it is unreasonable to suppose that Christ will be with us. We cannot be with Christ if we abandon Christ's doctrine, or if we forsake His discipline. They forsake His doctrine who deny any of the articles of the creeds

composed as rules of faith by the councils of the Church, under the Holy Spirit, infallible. They forsake His discipline, who abandon the Apostolic Church, by Him specially charged with ministering the Word and Sacraments, and alone so charged; as, for instance, those who presume to form congregations without bishops, or submit the spiritual powers involved in the Episcopate to lay hands, or prostitute them to the temporal purposes of a State, resigning those functions which distinguish the Church from every other power—*i. e.*, the power of the keys. All such defalcations from the order and authority, the purity of faith, and orthodoxy of the universal body, annul the promise of Christ to particular Churches. And when this happens—such Churches being virtually defunct (*functæ officio*)—their object and life as Churches are gone—their very meaning and essence extinct—nothing left in them which Christ gave—nothing retained which Christ commissioned;—when this happens (as it has done, so it may again), then, my brethren, I repeat, it is a very great argument of comfort to revert to the promise of Christ, and say, It may be for our sins and deep forgetfulness of God; for our continued neglect of His warnings, and unfaithful clinging to temporal support, instead of relying upon Him; it may be for our heresies unchecked, our disorders unremedied, our discipline abandoned, that the candlestick of that Church of England shall be withdrawn. In the midst of this local

ruin, Christ's promise beams forth as the sun of a bleak and dark and stormy day, and shows light afar. The Universal Church is still ours; still opens her arms for us all, and sits secure under the promise of the Lord of heaven and earth: "I am with you"—"Be not afraid"—"I am with you *always*." The world may perish—kingdoms totter and fall—dynasties shake, and be extinct—nation fade away after nation, and king after king—but there is the Rock ever the same. "Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Here you may be crushed and overwhelmed; here you may yield in the hour of temptation, there you may collapse and die out; Satan may be suffered to prevail awhile; but I am with you still, "ALWAYS, even unto the end of the world."

And, brethren, for our greater comfort herein, let us observe a little closer what our Blessed Lord really does say. Observe these three things: 1. The power given; 2. The manner in which it is given; and 3. The duration for which it is given.

1. The power. "*All* power is given unto Me." Whatever power this may be—such as it is—it is given to the Apostolic Ministry. He lives still by that power delegated to others, works by it, and infuses it, as the virtue of the Church, into those who are His Members. "As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you;" "All power is given unto Me"—All power must therefore be given unto you;

power that is not to be constrained. ALL power; power that is not to shrink from collision with other powers; power of the spirit, of the mind, of the heart, and of the soul; not power over bodies, but power over the inmost recesses of the working of the Spirit; power which must not quail before bodily persecution, losses, tortures, imprisonments, ridicule, hatred, death; but power which exists by, and in consequence of, these very antagonists, and is the greater because of them; power which lies buried invisible, until the world, by its sinfulness, its vanities, and its lies, draws it out, nourishes it, and brings it unto life, and sends it forth the living thing which it is, subjugating the world;—*The power of the keys.*

2. And what is the *manner*, or the exercise, of this power?—"Baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." From baptism in the Holy Name, from baptism in the invocation of the Holy and ever Blessed Trinity, is the power derived. Does the Church need power? Does the Church need authority? Do the Bishops require help and sustenance to do battle against the rulers of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places? And do they seek it in the arm of the temporal support of kings? Our Blessed Lord never gave them *that* promise. All power is given unto Me, and that power I give to you. Go ye therefore and BAPTIZE. *Therefore*, in the name of the Most High. This

grace is given only to them who have faith. Let the bishops and priests of any Church deny the faith of baptism, which is the prime mover of the power of the keys, and they deny faith in the Church; for our Lord, saying, "I give you all power," simultaneously says, "Go ye and baptize." Baptism with the gift of the Spirit is equivalent to the Church. Therefore, whenever a Church falls away from baptism, denies its necessarily inherent grace, or shrinks from the full preaching of the doctrine of its regenerating power, that Church denies its own existence, cancels its own authority, cuts from under its own feet the Rock upon which it before stood fast against the wiles of Satan. Let me put it thus, as on this great festival it seems so remarkably combined with the orthodox faith.

If there be no faith in baptism, as of necessity containing spiritual regeneration, there can be no faith in the Church; for when Jesus said, "All power is given unto Me," and followed that up by saying, "I give this power unto you," He followed it up yet again, by saying, "Therefore, go ye and baptize." And the converse: if you have faith in baptism, and its necessary regenerating grace, then you have faith in the Church through which that regenerating grace proceeds. And if you have faith in the Church, then why, brethren, do you still turn to the weak and beggarly elements of the law—still cling to the flesh-pots of Egypt—still lean on the broken reed of the world, and King's

courts and councils for your doctrine and your discipline? This reed will assuredly pierce you through and through: it has entered your side already, and soon it will pierce the very heart. There is the Power of the Holy Ghost—the Comforter. There is the Power of the Blessed Son—the Atonement. There is the Power of the Almighty Father in the mercy and love of a parent for children. This is, altogether in one, the Power of the Holy Trinity. If we are baptized into this name, we are baptized into this power; and if we really have this power conveyed to us, and it is in us, and breathes throughout our bodies, and animates our souls, and gives us life, and enables us to triumph over Satan, surely we ought not to forego it, or refuse to exercise it, or hide it under a napkin, or play with it as a useless gift, or treat it as an unnecessary appendage, or abandon it as an unmanageable incumbrance.

It is either a reality, or it is a mockery. If it be the latter, then the Word of God is vain; if it be the former, why do we shrink from its assertion?

3. Its duration. “Lo, I am with you ALWAYS.” Members of His Church can never be absent from Christ; for ALWAYS has no exception. We need comfort and support. He stands by. Why do we appeal to others when He is by? We are oppressed by the power of men. The Church groans under affliction, or labours under sorrow—or is perplexed by the contests of Satan—or is racked and split by the disputes of heretics. Why do we

appeal to the very arm which has destroyed us, and brought in these heresies, and not to HIM? If we believe His words, "Lo, I am with you always," why do we go to any other?—why have counsels with the men of the world, and not with the men of the Holy Trinity? Let me repeat again, either we do not believe that we have this power, and then the Word of God is vain—or we do believe we have this power, and then reject it. Either alternative is fearful; for in one case we are led to infidelity, in the other to distrust of God—seeking help of man, when God has promised to be by.

I would ask you, then, most solemnly, this day, to give heed to the words of your Saviour, with a faithful and true heart. Remember Who it is that you are about to support, and Whose cause it is that you are about to advance by your offerings this day. Remember that while He promised to be always with us, that promise has a reflex action in our co-operation with Him, according to the means with which He has decreed that His Church is to work. The laborer is worthy of his hire. They that take care of and feed the flock are to be fed with the milk of the flock. They that sow spiritual things are to reap a maintenance in temporal things. Whatever happens to the Teachers of the Word, happens to the Hearers. Let the Pastor fall, and the sheep fall. Let the Ministers of the Word be few, scanty, and inefficient, and then the people are scattered, and perish. Remove

the head-stone of the corner, and the building totters. All depends on you, brethren, under God. If you sincerely believe that Jesus is here still with you, as He *always* has been; if you believe in your Church as a Church, and that the promise of Christ's Presence still holds good in that Church; now is the time to show your faith—now is the time to lift up your *voice* in prayer, your *hearts* in love, and your *hands* in action.

SERMON XII.

THE RICH MAN.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, 1850.)

S. LUKE xvi. 19, 20.

“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.”

THERE is no greater contrast (though it seems very great) than that which we meet daily in human life. Not very far distant from us (as we assemble here to worship God) might such a contrast be found. The abundance of wealth—the costliness of luxury—the indulgence of every delight: contrasted by the most abject poverty—necessities so great as not to meet the wants of nature—pains and sorrows—miseries and woes. That such a contrast is God's Will—that such a contrast is inevitable, from the very nature of man's life, as a state of probation, we do not deny.

That we should attempt to destroy this contrast by schemes of universal equality—that we should build up a vain theory by which the distinctions of honor and successful industry might be set upon a level with the vices of the profligate, and the slothfulness of the idle, would be absurd. A state of equality is no more to be desired in temporal goods than it is in the capabilities of the mind. Nature herself is beautiful by the very reason of her variety—by the succession of hill and dale, mountain and lowly valley. The water which is stagnant, putrefies and is corrupt; while the running stream, though sometimes its channel is dry, still gladdens the fields, and vivifies the pastures, when the rain descends from heaven, and its banks are filled to overflowing. The other parables of our Lord quite agree in this. The talents and the pounds represent inequality, and though they demand of each an increase of usury according to the gifts, such increase is especially so demanded on the basis of an unequal foundation. And if you observe closely the parable before us now, there is nothing said against the *fact* of there being a Dives and a Lazarus. There is nothing said against the construction of society in bringing up some to the higher points of wealth, and depressing others to the lower places of poverty; but the two extremes are set down together side by side, as representing a state of things to be expected and allowed. The picture is not given for the sake of finding fault with the fact; but for

the sake of deducing lessons as to the conduct of men when placed in either of the extremes which the fact notifies. There is Dives, and there is Lazarus. He is not to be censured because he is Dives; but he is to teach us some lessons of warning in the way he acts *as* Dives.

Observe, then, the parable: we find two men in contiguous positions of life, dwelling not far apart from each other, neighbours, of the same country, of the same city, of the same religion, but differing in the one single aspect of worldly provision; we find both the men, notwithstanding this difference of their worldly goods, made practically equal in one respect, *i.e.*, their mortality—we find that they both die, the poor man first, and that he is carried to a place of great rest, peace, and comfort, Abraham's bosom; the rich man last, and that he is carried into a place of torment. The poor man is described as meeting with no comfort, no help, no redeeming points of any kind for his alleviation, as long as he remains alive, and when he dies nothing is said of his body, no burial, no funeral, no tears of friends or kindred; while, in the rich man's case, all the helps and aids of medicine and physicians, all the skill and science of men which money could purchase, were no doubt at his command, and, after death, still is his body treated with all the outward pomp and ceremony which his rank and station rendered customary. "*He was buried.*"

During the course of this world the contrast evidently runs through the whole circumstances and details of the two, in favor of the rich man, even to his dead body, even to his burial; but, directly this world terminates, the contrast is as strongly marked the other way. When the future life of each begins, and the soul is all that is left to be considered, the whole scene is at once changed. There we find the poor man assuming a superior place: rest from his labours, and peace, and eternal happiness in the bosom of Abraham. A great and impassable gulf, such as no one could pass, between them; and on the other side of that gulf, that very rich man, before so high and glorious, now so abject, so pained, so degraded, that he would fain ask for one drop of cold water to moisten his parched and burning tongue. Here, then, we find the first lesson to be drawn from the parable. A state of punishment and reward in a *future* state, compensating for and balancing the inequalities of the *present*, and so God's justice established.

Is it, then, to be said, in regard of a future state, that all it does is to reverse the order of things of this life? Are they to be punished with poverty (so to speak) in the next world who have been rich in this? and are they to become rich in the next world who have been poor in this? *i.e.*, does the future life's judgment merely consist in changing places? If that were the case, it would immediately follow, that every one of us, according to our faith

in the Gospel promises, would be seeking poverty, and clothing ourselves in rags, because mere riches would be but a sure pathway to the eternal torments of the damned. But that, in fact, would be the very thing which we just disclaimed, namely, the idea that salvation depended upon our *condition*, and not our conduct. No; the retribution set forth so awfully in the parable, is the retribution of a righteous Judge for the abuse of God's gifts, and nothing more. It is an argument against the unbeliever, when he attacks the truths of Revelation, and denies God's justice in the prosperity of the wicked, and the downfall of the righteous, to be able to say, This is not all! What you behold here is but a part. The wicked triumph here. The unrighteous succeed in their sins, and the counsel of the ungodly prospers, but wait until the end. The poor man cannot prevail; the innocent and the meek are afflicted, are borne down, are grievously oppressed with tribulation and suffering—but wait until the end, and then you will see that verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.

The judgment of the next world has indeed nothing to do with our condition. It deals solely with our character. Observe the character of the rich man, and you will soon detect the reason of the judgment. It horrifies and alarms you to see the state of Dives as depicted here, so much so, that sometimes you have been tempted to cast the book aside and disbelieve it. Sometimes you have been

so smitten down with terror at the thought of *yourself* being like this rich man, that, not willing to part with your riches, you have said, It cannot be, it is an exaggeration, it is a figure of speech, I do not believe it. But be not so inclined; rather examine the case more closely, and ask for the Holy Spirit to bless you in its contemplation.

Observe, then, Dives is not described as guilty of any outrageous act of wickedness against God; no absolutely criminal or vicious excess is brought against him; he is simply described as clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day; while, on the other hand, Lazarus is described as endued with no particular or active virtues, no very prominent expressions of contentment or humility of faith proceed out of his mouth, he is merely described as "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table." Yet at the end of the parable there is a reason given for the change of their condition, as if it appeared merely to result from a desire, on God's part, to reverse the things of this life: "*Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*" Now all this seems at first rather surprising; but my brethren, the deeper you look, the deeper you (who are certainly more on the side of Dives than of Lazarus in this world) look into this parable, the more you will be convinced of the dangerous responsibility of

your riches; the more closely must you look into your own hearts to see whether by your present lives you are not imitating this Dives *unawares*.

Let us suppose that you have no actual tangible vices, that you make a decent display of charity, that your name is set down to this and that public institution, that you give a certain sum of money out of your annual income in various ways, for the benefit of your fellow-creatures, that you carefully abstain from all gross and criminal excesses, that you cautiously display to the world a moderate observance of the outward forms of religion, that you are found at Church, and at the Blessed Sacrament, just frequently enough to preserve decency, and keep within the legal form, and that all the usual things demanded of one in your station are carefully maintained by you; then, quite satisfied as to these matters, is it not very probable that, from your position in the world, having done all this, you think that “you have a *right, then*, to clothe yourself in purple and fine linen, and to fare sumptuously every day.” A great many do think so. Now, probe this state of things to the bottom. If you do no more than this, are you not precisely what Dives was? And what was that? A negative character—negatively a harmless, but positively a useless man; negatively he used the good gifts with which God had blessed him, but entirely on himself; negatively he caused to be given to the poor Lazarus the crumbs which fell

from his table; I say negatively, for though it is said that Lazarus desired to be fed with these crumbs, it is not said that he received them. Probably he did not; and even if he did, it is not said that Dives gave them; they might have been, as so many rich people give things now, through the medium of servants, without their own knowledge or care. Therefore, though Dives might have been the remote cause of the crumbs being given to Lazarus, he might himself have had no part in it; he deprived himself of nothing thereby; the crumbs cost him nothing, he made no sacrifice, he gave up no pleasure, he forsook no delicacy, but he continued to fare just as sumptuously, and to be clothed with just as fine linen as before. Negatively, again, he permitted the dogs to go and lick Lazarus' sores, but he took no active steps either to prevent it or forward it; it was done accidentally, and without reference to him; it did not affect him, his heart moved not at the sight, he shed no tear of sympathy, he asked no questions, he administered no word of comfort, he gave no cup of cold water, he bound not up his wounds, he took him to no inn, he took from his purse no pence; but he continued just as before, selfish and careless, and wrapt up in his own enjoyment, making no single exertion, either in mind or body, for the good of his afflicted brother.

You will observe, then, that the absence of any great criminal indulgence in the possessor of

riches does not withdraw him from the case of Dives in this parable. Make a clear line of distinction between active and (so to speak) passive sin; between the outrageous perpetrator of known and recognized immorality, and the torpid sleepiness of the permitter of invisible acts of neglect. You make yourself, as a rich man, comfortable in the idea, that you are not guilty of any great breach of God's commandments—no adultery, or fornication, or fraud, or rapine, or dishonest dealing, stains the fair features of your polished and easy career. You defy the world to detect a flaw; you injure no man; you are above suspicion; you float along the gentle stream of a fair fame amid the world, and a conscience satisfied with self, and there is nothing to discompose or ruffle the quiet pleasures along which, from morning to night, your unquestioned course is passing. Well; was it not just so with Dives? Can you say anything against Dives further than you thus say as representing yourself? Where are you different? Did *he* commit any great sin against God? None is recorded. Did he actively do injury to society by a bad example? It is not said. Was he guilty of any violent tyranny against the poor, of fraud, or extortion? We do not hear of it. Honestly compare the society of the rich of the present day with the character of Dives. The parallel may startle you, but it will be exact. Our rich men now are just as remarkable, as a class, as he was for

a passive sufferance of the crumbs of their table being swept away, they not knowing whither they are to go; just as much ignoring the Lazarus at their door; just as passive in the existence of wrong around them; indolently saying to themselves (not purposely, or when the case is pressed home to them, but out of a sheer torpid indifference to everything but themselves), indolently saying, "I am doing no harm," and there resting content. How quickly and awfully does the truth flash upon us, which our Blessed Lord has taught—"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

But it ill becomes us thus to declaim against the errors of the rich, unless, as the servants of God, in this place we strive to trace the causes of them, for their guarding and their admonition. It is an anxious thing to see, in many cases, very generous and very amiable dispositions utterly thrown away and cast into states of fearful responsibility, without any appearance, on their own part, of being aware of it. It is an anxious thing to turn round here and there, amid the magnificent exuberance of a rich man's dwelling, and converse with him for a while, and slowly be brought to the conviction, that, amid much that is honorable, upright, and, as the world calls it, gentlemanly, there lies hid, nevertheless, the poison of Dives, in a polished and luxurious selfishness, that is not perceived even by the conscience that seeks to do its part. It proves the

exceeding treachery and deceitfulness of the enemy of souls. But so it is.

One reason is this: The mistaken love of parents for children, working, as its consequence, excessive and unlimited indulgence. The children of the rich are seldom, as children, made acquainted with the existence of poverty. They know it not. They know neither hunger or thirst. If pain or sickness comes, it is alleviated by all the endearments of affection, and all the soothing of medicine and skill. Every want is anticipated, every distress cleared away, every wrong vanishes, and is hidden out of sight. The children of the rich do nothing for themselves, but all is found ready to their hands. They seem to be made but for a passive reception of the bounties of a Providence Which they expect to supply from others all that they want themselves. Instead of being led, as their young minds would naturally lead them, to commiserate the sorrow of their fellow-creatures, they are carefully told not to dwell on topics so disagreeable. To enter the cottages of the poor is forbidden; to associate with their inmates, learn their ways, join in their lowly meals, and witness with their own eyes how little it is that man really wants, and so compare with reluctance the sumptuous squandering of their own table, or the luxurious indulgence of their own furniture; thus they come to man's estate, passing through school and college without an idea of what the world of poverty beneath them is.

They know it not. And with women this is even more so than with men. The delicacy and refinement with which they are sedulously guarded against the disagreeables of life, must render them, unless God of His Mercy counteracts the danger by some blessed visitation—not from any natural want of sympathy with the sorrows of the poor, but from their ignorance of their existence—first selfish, then careless, then hard-hearted. All they know of poverty is from books, where it is dressed up to suit the imaginary description of a tale, the impression of which dies away with its reading. All they know of hunger and thirst, of want or woe, is derived from the excitements of the novelist, or the exaggerated passions of dramatic representation.

It is all vain. They sink and sink softly down into the luxurious apathy of a selfish unconcerned life. They care for nought but what floats before their present vision in a ruinous expenditure of wealth on trifles, when God had made them for all the warm sympathies of a loving and affectionate heart, and the greater things of an active and benevolent life. I should say, then, brethren, accustom your children to the sights and realities of Lazarus; and then, as men and women, they will be the less exposed to the dangers of Dives.

Another source of danger to the rich man arises from flattery:—First, from the flattery and adulation with which he is universally treated in the world. The rich man seldom hears the truth.

Poor and moderate men are told of their faults. If they err, their error is pointed out without sparing. As they go on their way they see and feel, from the averted looks and alienated hearts of their brethren, that even in their estimation they have fallen, and are accountable even to society for wrong. But the forms of the world—the usages of society—the temptations with which needy men are pressed, at any hazard, to make the rich their friends—the air of distinction which is thrown over them—the higher caste into which they form their society—and, indeed, in some respects, that which in itself is good, as their purer taste, their more gentle occupations, their keener sensitiveness about what is beautiful, their greater zest in pleasures derived from art and science, and in various intellectual pursuits—all these, and many more such things, forming their habits and ways, conceal the homely truths of their manifold deficiencies. And so their whole life is, in many cases, but one general ingenious deceit. They pass from the cradle to the grave in one great falsehood, flattered and deceived, both by their dependents and themselves, while the knowledge of sin, and the reality of their own short-comings, is entirely withheld from them, as a thing which never existed. I should say, then, my brethren, Listen not to the flattery of dependents.

A third cause of the difficulties thrown in the rich man's course is this: His habit of performing one of the great duties of the Gospel by deputy,

and not in his own person. I call Almsgiving one of the three great duties of the Gospel, for it is joined by our Blessed Lord with Prayer and Fasting; but almsgiving, as now performed by the rich, is no exemplification of the great work which our Lord enforced. Subscriptions for charities, which require no more than the signature of a name—making speeches at public meetings, which tend rather to gratify pride than to excite any feeling of love—and joining in luxurious banquets, which feed the appetites of personal and bodily passions—this way of almsgiving, which is now so prevalent amongst us, cannot well be said to agree with the feeding of the hungry, the giving drink to the thirsty, the visiting sick, and prisoners, and the clothing the naked, which is described as the almsgiving work for which, in doing or neglecting to do, the Judgment-day will call us to account. It is but little more than suffering crumbs to be swept from our table, and given to some Lazarus whom we have never seen or cared for. It must be found that it will not count for much when the books shall be opened against us. Personal intercourse of the rich with the poor is absolutely essential for the good of each, and specially for the spirit of almsgiving. While all is abundant in our own houses, it is hard to be told that at the next door there is starvation—while the world to us seems made for pleasure, it is hard to be told that hundreds in the villages and towns round about us are

suffering distress—while we have purple and fine linen, it is disagreeable to have it forced upon our notice, that thousands in the streets, in company with our Blessed Lord, have not a place where to lay their head. There arises an unwillingness to look personally upon suffering, and we fly from it. We dole out our alms by deputy, which is of no avail to create the sympathy which true charity requires. It is easy enough to imagine poverty, or dress it up in poetry, but it is another thing to bear with it in its practical debasements, and its real wants and woes. It is not the knowledge of poverty that is wanting, but its personal admixture with riches, so that the rich man may himself descend into it, and of himself disperse it, and not by the hand of another. Here it is, brethren, that the rich men of the present day fail, and here lies their greatest danger. They fail, because they theorize, and do not practically take part with the poor man who lies at their door full of sores. They fail, because they sweep off only their crumbs, and do not give of the substance of their love. They themselves are walking over smooth velvet lawns, and tread the way of life on the gentle slopes of a fair and smiling garden. The poor man hard by is struggling over the mountain rocks, contending with sharp cutting miseries, and storm-driven sorrows. But you will not help him, nor hold out your hand to lift him out of his struggles, nor relieve him of his load. You merely talk over your fireside, while he is perishing with cold.

You will not go forth and desert all that is your own, and search for him in his misery. You will not give up your favorite pleasures, or sacrifice your habitual indulgences. You will not sell some house or land; you will not take off one of your two coats; you will not suffer disgrace, or speaking against or ridicule of the world, to save him from a death-bed of misery, sitting by his side in the lone watches of the night, bearing with the noisomeness of his disease, and mixing yourself in the vulgar, perhaps the sinful habits of his degradation and his poverty. And yet, brethren, this is real Christianity; this alone true charity. How stern the commands, how unflinching the precepts of the Gospel tending towards this point. If you desire the crown, you must abide by the cross: Jesus says, "Go thy way, sell all, whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come take up the cross and follow Me." The early Christians did sell all that they had, and gave to the poor—they did possess everything in common—but to follow, in these days, such a rule as this, would be deemed fanaticism. It may be we do not require it. I do not think that Christianity, strain it to the very utmost, would require this sacrifice now, and that it was only a state of society fitted for the first stages of the Gospel, when that Gospel was literally a cross, and to be a Christian was equivalent to a profession of readiness to die. This may be granted; but, my brethren, there is

some difference between this extreme and that other extreme marked in the character of Dives. Is there no medium between selfishness and enthusiasm? We will give you up somewhat for the higher, but still, it must be confessed, spurious wants, which your education has in a manner created—we will give you up some little for the ornaments of life, some little to the superfluities of life, some little to the pleasures of life—but we would take from you all that you spend in the vicious excesses, and idle ostentation, and unnecessary self-indulgences of the world in which you live. For instance, I would take from you such selfish and profligate expenditure as the race-course demands of you, as the opera exacts of you, as the ball and the banquet claim of you, which is not for hospitality, but for mere vanity, ostentation, and pride. These expenditures I would ask of you, and turn them into hospitals for the sick, labor for the industrious, food and shelter for orphans, instruction for the ignorant, churches for God's worship, and houses of penitence for sinners.

O, my brethren, fret not with yourselves because you hear these unwelcome truths. If you are flattered and deceived by the world, be not angry that you now hear realities without disguise. Let us take for granted that you came here for the Truth's sake, and, so coming, learn what the Church desires to teach, by placing the parable of Dives and Lazarus before you as the Holy Gospel of this

day. Bear with the preacher, and thank God that there is one place at least where all riches are valueless, except they be the true riches, and that is, the Presence of the Living God here before His Holy Altar. What though you be high, and great, and noble, and fare sumptuously every day—what though you be withdrawn, by the delicate flatteries of an accommodating world, from the rough and homely accents of an honest friend at home—yet thank God, for your soul's sake, that truth may reach you here. The Church must not play the hypocrite, though the world may. There is a far higher nobility which you may reach, simply as a Christian, than any you possess of the world, in the most ancient name, or in the largest possessions of your houses and your lands; even as the martyr S. Agatha beautifully said, when she was upbraided, because, being of illustrious parentage, she stooped to the mean and humble office of comforting the poor: “Our nobility,” she answered, “lies in this, that we are the servants of Christ.” One who well understood the character of Christianity, and yet was no great advocate in its favor, Gibbon the historian, thus describes the Christians of the early ages:—“Their serious and sequestered life, averse to the gay luxury of the age, inured them to chastity, temperance, economy, and all the sober and domestic virtues. Their contempt of the world exercised them in habits of humility, meekness, and patience. Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the

Gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, they carried the duties of self-mortification, of purity, and of patience, to a height which it is scarcely possible to attain in our present state of weakness and corruption. They despised all knowledge that was not useful to salvation, and considered all levity of discourse as a criminal abuse of the gift of speech. The candidate for Heaven was instructed not only to resist the grosser allurements of taste or smell, but even to shut his ears against the profane harmony of sounds, and to view with indifference the most finished productions of human art. Gay apparel, magnificent houses, and elegant furniture, were supposed to unite the double guilt of pride and sensuality—a simple and mortified appearance was more suitable to the Christian who was certain of his sins, and doubtful of his salvation.”

Now, though some of this description may go beyond our notions of the obligations of Christianity at the present day; yet still it contains a faithful delineation of what Christianity was, and what sacrifices were demanded in return for her promised rewards. Interpret the pledge of baptism as loosely as you may, yet still abide by the words, in any interpretation however loose:—“*to renounce the vain pomps and glory of this wicked world*”—and you cannot but acknowledge, in all candor, that our general lives of this present age fall immeasurably short of that solemn vow and compact made between ourselves and God.

And at the root of all, the source and origin of all, is just that very fault depicted in the rich man of this morning's parable, *selfishness*. Yet what says every page of the Holy Scripture?—"Look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others." When thou makest a feast, call not the rich, for they can give you recompense, but call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind. "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?" And yet, once more—"Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

SERMON XIII.

THE HEARER.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, 1850.)

S. LUKE viii. 18.

“Take heed, therefore, how ye hear.”

ONE of the most remarkable effects of the teaching of our Blessed Lord was this: the continual application of wicked men “*to hear Him.*” We do not read much of the righteous or the good, those who might have been exercised in all the ordinances of the law blameless—those who might have been pure in life, or sound in faith—we do not hear of these as ever pressing round Him in crowds, to hear and examine what He had to say; but we do continually hear of “publicans and sinners.” Even as the sick crowd round the physician, and not the whole—so it was the sinner that came to hear, and not the saint: as He Himself observed—“I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” It is observable how very often this happened. In those who were un-

sound in their faith—as the Sadducees: they questioned the Resurrection: they denied the existence of angels and spirits:—and so we find them continually hovering round our Lord, asking Him questions. Or those who were willing to make their faith subject to their politics—as the Herodians: or those who were jealous of any infringement of their personal authority—as the chief Priests and Scribes: or those who were not scrupulous to conceal or mutilate their faith by external assumptions of righteousness, to deceive others—as the Pharisees: or those who were unsound in their morals—as the harlots, the publicans, and the sinners. How continually all these classes are described as forming Christ's society. He sits down with them to meat. He converses with them: they ask Him questions. They flock round Him in towns and villages, in the wilderness, and by the way-side. They are continually “drawing near to Him,” as it is said in S. Luke, “*to hear Him.*”

From this we gather, that in the first outset the mere fact of large congregations collected together, with great avidity and earnestness, to listen to a preacher's voice, does not infer (without taking other circumstances into bearing) that their hearts, tempers, principles, or faith, are by any means right in the sight of God. And it brings us to a consideration of the exact value of *hearing* in

religion; what place it holds in the growth and progress of faith; how far it is of value, and should be encouraged; and where it not only ceases to be of value, but becomes detrimental.

In the first place, it is very evident that there is a natural delight in great bodies of men listening to the communications made to them by one of authority or power; and, if these communications are made in the manner of oratory, in proportion to the oratorical ability of the speaker, so is the gratification to the hearer. A great deal, also, depends upon the subject of the communication; in proportion to its importance, so is the eagerness with which men flock to hear what is said. For this reason, the subject of religion has ever formed, since the time of our Lord, the principal subject of oratorical speaking. No oratory in the world, either modern or ancient, can equal the addresses of S. Paul, even as we have them in the Acts of the Apostles; and, if we may judge from the crowds that followed him, the places where he preached, and the effects which are described as immediately following, they must have been, (as of course they were, being under the immediate inspiration of God,) the most wonderful instances of human eloquence which can be conceived. So, in the present day, it is interesting to hear any one of ordinary power in speaking address a large assembly of people. The proof is seen in the

multitudes who are in a moment gathered together, when it is notified that an address is to be made on any special subject.

I only mention this now, to show how it is primarily natural for men to listen to preaching; how, therefore, when preaching becomes a part of congregational assemblies for the worship of God, it is natural that many should be led thither by this primary movement in their hearts, if merely desiring to hear. It is gratifying to the taste to hear those speak who have the wisdom and the grace of fluent speech. It is gratifying to the intellect to hear those speak who have the power of argument and reasoning. It is gratifying to the heart to hear holy lessons of goodness, benevolence, and love, set forth for learning. It is gratifying to the general spirit of human nature to be stirred and excited by powerful appeals to the passions. Is it any wonder, then, that crowds are brought together in public worship, whose object is centred in this one special part of it? We ought not, indeed, to be astonished that hundreds are present at sermons, who, though they never pray, still are very good hearers; and that multitudes are totally ignorant in their hearts both of the object of public worship and its method, wanting altogether in the finer and higher points of public service, who yet are considerable adepts in listening to a sermon. I say, we ought not to be surprised, because it is merely a proof of the great bulk of mankind being in reli-

gion, even yet, mere beginners. They are but pupils: they are only coming to learn. It is no proof necessarily of insincerity, or of bad intentions, or of heedlessness in the path of Christianity—no proof abstractedly and in itself—it is only a proof of the work of the Gospel being as yet very elementary in their hearts.

But still there are dangers in this; and these dangers I would now endeavor to point out to you. And for this purpose, I would take three principal motives of hearing which we find in general prevailing: curiosity, interest, and alarm. And, first, of curiosity.

“Pilate,” it is said in the Gospel of S. Luke, “sent Jesus to Herod; and when Herod saw Him, he was exceeding glad, for he was desirous to see Him, because he had heard many things of Him; and he had hoped to see some miracle done by Him.” There could not be a more exact picture of a “hearer” moved by a mere depraved curiosity. There was no distinct knowledge of what was required, no expectation of anything definite, no conviction on account of sin, no clear object of any advantage to be gained, either in point of instruction or consolation; but it was a mere vague, desultory desire “to hear,” because there were floating about among the people reports concerning a remarkable person. It is not very unlike the movements of many an idle worldling of the present day. The preacher and his sayings are made

the subject of some common talk at some common place of meeting, and many wonderful things are said, mixed up of truth and falsehood, fiction and rumour; and this goes on until a kind of accidental curiosity is kindled, and, like Herod, the person who is informed of these great things has a desire to "hear him." It is just that placid kind of curiosity which is described in the words, "When Herod saw Him." By an accident the opportunity is brought before him, and then he gladly goes "to hear."

Festus had aroused the attention of Agrippa by relating the way in which S. Paul had conducted himself when arraigned before the tribunal. He had spoken of certain questions of "superstition, and of one Jesus, Which was dead, Whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Then Agrippa said unto Festus, "*I would also hear the man myself.*" Another phase of curiosity—not a miracle, as in Herod's case, but a doctrine. S. Paul was a remarkable man; his preaching had made a great popular disturbance; he was marked out among the chief rulers and the priests as a new convert to a superstitious creed, disturbing the peace of the community. Naturally Agrippa "would hear the man himself." It was well worth while so to do, for various reasons; and so this great man and his company came down to see the sight, and hear the words of the wonderful Apostle of the Gentiles; and not only he himself, in an ordinary and unobtrusive way, as one desirous

of learning religion, but “with pomp and ceremony,” “with Bernice and the chief captains, and principal men of the city.” All mere curiosity. Just as some of our great ones, when they hear of a celebrated preacher; they clothe themselves in all importance, and, with a mixture of condescension and curiosity, go to hear the preacher; and the result is somewhat the same as it was with Agrippa — “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”

The moving power was met with a result in proportion. There was an impression made; there was a dislodgment of some heathen prejudices, and a setting aside of some natural reasoning; and a way seemed almost open for success, but not quite. There was a sensation amid the royal court, there was astonishment and wonder among the chief captains, there was a want and a longing to know what it all meant, but the curiosity which began did not continue, and the longing did not last; and, as in ourselves when we go with much bustle and parade to hear, the motive does not deserve the grace of faith, and it is only “almost” that we become Christians—very nearly, but never altogether. But not only have we Herod, a type of the wicked and the ungodly, and Agrippa, a type of the pompous and the great, but we have the same note of curious hearing in the very lowest; for it is said of our Blessed Lord, that “the common people *heard Him* gladly.” His words of wisdom pleased them; His gentle admonitions of love, spe-

cially in the parables, delighted their fancy; His uncompromising character in rebuking vice, without respect of persons, won their confidence; and from one to the other the desire spread "to hear" Him. But we cannot help remarking how this "glad hearing" was very little more than a depraved and meaningless curiosity; for this very common people were the first and loudest in the cry, "Crucify, crucify Him," and that not long after their gladness in hearing.

Need I remark how common this is among us all—how we are habitually provoking and exciting each other on the subject of strange preachers, and how eagerly we are, as a people, running from place to place, in mere curiosity, to hear and speak, as the Athenians, about something new. And it generally happens that the stranger the doctrine that is to be delivered, the more itching are the ears of men to hear it; it is no matter whether heresy be broached, or schism advocated, so long as the oratory is powerful, and the manner novel.

Thus we know in one now departed, (therefore not in harshness but in sorrow must he be spoken of). In the case of one now departed, the founder of a sect—one not in our own communion, but of a Presbyterian form of faith; because great earnestness and very extraordinary eloquence were in his preaching, therefore did crowds of men continually flock "to hear him," crowds of the very highest in the land, the very greatest of every denomination

and rank, all flocked thither. The motive could have been nothing more than that popular curiosity of which we now speak. A dangerous curiosity as it proved to many; for it provoked them, or rather God suffered them to be provoked thereby into a strange schism—a schism which still rends the Church asunder. My brethren, let me ask you, from these examples of warning, should you ever be tempted to hear strange preachers, to question yourselves whether the motive be curiosity. If so, abstain, and content yourselves with the Word of God delivered, it may be with less gratification to the ear, but with food more wholesome and nutritious to the soul.

Let us speak now of another cause which may sometimes operate in this case—Interest. An instance of this will occur in the crowds which followed our Lord, from place to place, for the sake of His miracles; and more particularly in one case, where our Lord, having worked His miracle of feeding the five thousand, passed over from one side of the lake to the other; and when the people were following Him with great avidity, Jesus answered and said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek Me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.” The same was the case in Judas Iscariot; for what could have induced him to be a follower, a disciple, a hearer, nay, even an Apostle of the Blessed Jesus, but, as he thought, his *interest*; and so it is said, he

“bore the bag.” And it was manifest again in Simon Magus, who would pretend to be a hearer of the Lord, and even a teacher of His Word, and would have given much gold to purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost, wherefore but for this, that he might sell it for more, and so make gain. And it was manifest, also, very directly and conspicuously, in Felix. “He sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ;” and when Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, that affected not Felix; but still he went on, as we say, “hearing him,” for it is added, “He hoped, also, that money should have been given him of Paul, wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.”

Now, in regard to ourselves, this cause of going to hear will very slightly, and only remotely, affect us. To hear in order to receive gain, in a direct manner, is of course out of the question; but I am afraid we are not altogether exempt from it. The poor of our great parishes, I fear, are sometimes induced to attend the ministrations of the Church from some such sinister motive, as the “loaves” by which they may be filled thereby. They are found in some cases in Church, not because of the doctrine, but because of the advantages; and if there were many poor at present among us, much might be said to them on the impiety and the hypocrisy of such dealing with God.

But, my brethren, even in the rich, even in the

higher orders—though interest in this coarse and direct manner cannot of course be said to be a motive with them—yet it still may be so indirectly. For interest will embrace much more than a mere receipt of an actual gain, as in the case of Felix. It will embrace many insidious sources of advantage, though not so visible, yet quite as sinful. For instance, one great inducement, perhaps unknown, and at any rate unthought of, by those whom it secretly leads, is the fashion of the day. There is a great deal of fashion in that sort of profession of religion which goes under the name of "*hearing*." Every one of our acquaintances or friends has, as it is termed, "heard such an one;" we also must go and do the like: it is not in this case curiosity, for men's hearts may be as listless and inert in the hearing of one as in the hearing of another. It may be indeed an exertion to them to deviate from their usual habits, and to be found at distant places; but still, as the world does, so must they do. What would be said if they had not heard as others have heard? if they should be ignorant and compelled to silence, where others are dealing loudly in criticism, it would not be well: they must know what others know, and be able to speak what others speak of. As they would go to a celebrated player, so would they go to a celebrated preacher; as it is the fashion to speak of an opera, so of a sermon. I fear that there is a great deal of this sort of hearing among us—that whenever there

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is a fashion in vogue as to preaching, thither multitudes go, in order that they may keep up a good opinion (such as it is) with men. It is a low, carnal, unworthy motive, highly to be reprobated. It displays an unsound, and an unsafe tone of religious profession. It is hollow, artificial, and hypocritical. It cannot but, sooner or later, be visited by God with some signal mark of His indignation, because it is a playing with the things of the Spirit, because it is a making light of one of the chief means of His work in our hearts, because it brings in the world, which is at enmity with God, as a motive for pleasing itself, while it pretends to be doing His work. Better would it be for you, brethren, to sit within your own houses still and silent, and make no pretence of religion, either in hearing or in doing; better to follow the great stream of the actually wicked, than thus, with the apathy of a worldly spirit, go forth to pretend to an anxiety of religion which you do not feel. If you have it not within your heart to hear sermons, if it does not come home to your feelings, do not pretend that it does. Though in the one case, by some you may be lamented over as deficient in spiritual tone, in the other you will be execrated by all good men as hypocrites.

3. I shall now proceed to a third cause which sends hearers to the house of God—Alarm. This is certainly many degrees higher than either of the preceding causes. It is, I may almost say, a justi-

fiable cause—one mercifully sent of God; and, if it could but be carried on with perseverance, might, in many cases, terminate in a blessing. It was alarm, a fear of conscience, a misgiving of heart, that sent the rich young man to Christ to hear Him, and to ask Him, "How he should inherit eternal life?" and that sent the lawyer to ask the question, "Which was the greatest of the ten commandments?" and that caused Herod so frequently to observe, (*i.e.*, to listen to) the preaching of John the Baptist: "For Herod," S. Mark tells us, "feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly."

And not far otherwise in ourselves. There will be times when our sins will rise up against us, when a consciousness of secret deviations from holiness will rise up within us, and cause us to cry, "*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*" He that is a sinner cannot have been a sinner all his life without many a warning from God in the outcries of an alarmed conscience: "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." It is not until repeated courses of profligacy have been persisted in, against the suggestions of conscience, that the mind is entirely blunted, and the heart made entirely gross. This does come to pass *at last*. But many are the times (varying in degree, according to the working of the Spirit within, and according to the reception of the Spirit when thus offered),

but many are the times when, in some degree, the judgment of Almighty God will force itself forward as a topic of meditation for the sinner; and his thoughts, full of fear, will compel him to fly unwittingly to God. It is at such times as these that "hearing" becomes one of the special means of grace: but, alas! how is this means of grace perverted and lost! It is medicine sent from God for healing, turned into a poison by man's abuse: for as there are various hearers, so are there various preachers. There is not one doctrine now among us, nor one creed, nor one prayer, nor one Church; and here lies the danger of "hearing," when a want of it arises from sensibility to sin; for the sinner is just as likely to seek wrongly for his cure as rightly—just as likely to apply to unskilful physicians as to skilful; and may be, from the unwillingness there is in us all to confess wrong, or from the anxiety we naturally have to be permitted a continuance of the indulgences which have so long formed the habit of our lives, the attraction of hearing would rather drive us to the loose and compromising exposition of God's Word, than to those who would bind us with the severity which we need. Thus it often happens that the alarmed sinner flies "to hear" in the very direction that will be most likely to insure his ultimate destruction. He avoids S. John the Baptist, who would preach repentance, and one baptism for the remission of sins, and seeks comfort rather in some unsound preacher who will

tell him of the enlightenments of grace; he buries himself in the comforting assurance, that his sins are none of his own fault, and that his restoration will depend on nothing of his own exertion—so he perishes.

And there are others, too, who thus “hear” with a sort of desire to know how little they may part with and be safe. There is a sort of inquisitive fear, just desiring to know something more certainly about sin, death, judgment, and hell, lest by chance these things should be true; or it is a sort of anxious desire to find out what topics of consolation a preacher may set forth to lighten the burden of sin, without involving the necessity of forsaking it fundamentally—not plucking out the eye, or cutting off the hand, but a gentler treatment, which may save the diseased members; it is an attempt to place a salve upon the conscience, by hearing what excuses, or palliations, there may be to extenuate crime in the infirmity of nature, the strength of temptation, or the mercy of God in a sacrifice made by another, ready at his hand, so as to escape the sacrifice of the passions, the ungodliness, or the worldliness of his own bad life. He is a publican and sinner, and he comes with a crowd to hear Christ, and he would go where he can best get relief at the cheapest cost to himself; and if he knows of faith being held up as the great Gospel doctrine, without the necessity of good works to accompany it, of the righteousness of another as

imputed to him, without the necessity of looking to the righteousness of himself—if he can find out such a Gospel as this, far or near, there he becomes a “hearer,” and imagines that all is well in that “hearing.” Oh, my brethren, what a fatal miserable deception this must be. Like Herod, just mentioned, he would hear John gladly, as far as abstract matters went, and yet when S. John did not please him in the doctrine which personally touched himself, namely, that he must repudiate Herodias, he would send that holy man’s head in a charger, to please the wicked woman whom he foully loved. Of what avail is hearing such as this? A hearing which will only be attended to so long as the things heard are easy, agreeable, and consonant with one’s own bad feelings within, a hearing which will be praised with admiration, and followed with avidity, just so long as the doctrines heard convey comfort, satisfaction, and compliance with one’s own opinions; but if they touch upon any one notion contrary to that which we ourselves have been used to, or love—then to be forsaken, scouted, and despised. Better not have the privilege at all than thus abuse it; better to have a mill-stone tied round one’s neck, and be drowned in the midst of the sea, than thus offend God by presuming to flock round the Gospel, as though we would do all its behests, and then make ourselves the judges of what those behests are. Let me beseech you, brethren, if alarm for sin be your exciting motive

in seeking the ordinance of preaching, be, above all things, wary and cautious, not only *how* you hear, but also *whom* you hear.

I have thus pointed out to your notice three very main causes of the "hearing" of God's Word, as now we find it among us; may not what I have said in some degree account for the paucity of the doers of it, in comparison with the hearers? Not but that each of these causes might, under God's Grace, be brought to a better issue, but I am speaking only of the dangers, not of the way, in which God, in His Mercy, sometimes turns a very danger into a blessing. I believe He does so in this most eminently. I believe that, in many instances, both curiosity, and interest, and alarm, have been turned, by the mercy of God, into steps of salvation. Thus a man, led by a mere curiosity to witness or to hear something said by a wonderful preacher, might find that curiosity leading him on further and further, even though he knew it not, until it landed him in a true and sincere search after the spiritual things of God; or a man who was studying his own interest in making pretexts to a profession of hearing, might, under the providence of God, hear some day a truth which would impress itself upon his mind more deeply than was wont, and show him that the true interest which he should seek for would be not in this world, but in the kingdom of God in heaven; or a man becoming a hearer from a consciousness of sin, though searching for a remedy

which should not greatly trouble him, yet might one day be so convinced by the influencing power of the Holy Ghost, that he would turn from the hypocritical hearing of his usual nature, and give himself to true repentance, mortification, and submission of all his will to God's Will. But you will observe, that though all this might be true, yet it would be true independently of the position maintained, that these causes are unworthy and illegitimate causes (if purposely taken up as causes) of the hearing of God's Word. It is not now as when Christianity was first preached, and men were called out of a state of heathenism, or a state of Judaism, to embrace the glad tidings of a Saviour, then for the first time made known to them. It is not as the jailor at Philippi, who, struck with the mighty evidences of the Gospel truth, never heard of till that moment, cried out, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" It is not even as the Jews who, listening to Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, were suddenly convinced by evidences which before they perceived not; and "being pricked in their hearts, said unto Peter, and the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" It is not this sort of "hearing" which comes before us of the present day—not the hearing of the *first* announcement of glad tidings—not the hearing of Salvation as a novelty; for we are already baptized—have already washed away our sins in the laver of regeneration—have already

made profession of our faith in Christ Crucified, our Saviour, our Atonement, and our God; and therefore it is that in these days, days of regular instruction, with discipline and method, days of fixed and permanent religious institutions, men are not justified in satiating their curiosity, their self-interest, or their alarms, in making to themselves "itching ears," and spending all their time and substance in hearing, instead of praying—in criticising, instead of obeying—and making themselves the judges of how far those who teach know more or know less than they themselves. No, my brethren, this sort of religion must be vain. It is worse than vain—dangerous in the self-sufficiency, and self-satisfaction, and self-seeking, which it must engender in the hearts of those who will pursue it.

There are two parties who will have to consider this: the preachers of the Word, who are sent from God—and the people to whom they are sent. On *our* part, the preachers of the Word, we shall do well to reflect that the fact of large multitudes flocking to a Church "*to hear*" by no means displays any certain sign of the truth of Christianity in all its vital and faithful efficiency. A thronging crowd pressing into God's Holy Temple, is, indeed, a glorious and a beautiful sight—one which might, at the first impression, be taken as a sign of the fruitfulness and the success of our ministration. But it is not necessarily so—we must go deeper than this mere superficialities—we must go on and

examine into the motives and the causes of this thronging crowd: what has brought them there? curiosity?—accident?—some temporary alarm or excitement? We must go on and observe this thronging crowd in their conduct when there. Are they a thronging crowd, which prays with the ministering priest, and that not only on the Sunday, but also in the daily offices—which remains with the ministering priest continually and stedfastly in the communion of the Lord's Body and Blood? Are they devout, reverential, displaying, by their behaviour, a mind deeply and faithfully intent on the spiritual and heavenly duties which they have come to perform—manifesting, by their humble aspect, their kneeling bodies, their uplifted voices, the value of the things for which they are asking, their own unworthiness to ask, and the awful mysterious Presence of Him Who stands among them, and with them, to be asked?

And then we must follow this thronging crowd home—we must walk along with them into their houses, and see them in their families, and sit with them in their own especial world—we must know about their lives; about their private and secret prayer in their closet; about their alms-giving; about their self-sacrifice and obedience; about their lusts of the flesh, wrestled with, and subdued—tempers contented, and made gentle—evil habits forsaken—injuries forgiven—enemies loved—and God in all their hearts. Of all this we, as ministers of the

Word, must be well assured, before we can say, of the multitude who pressed forward "*to hear*," whether that be a sign of the successfulness or the blessing of our ministration in Christ. And so let us have no vanity and vain-glorying in the thought about large congregations; rather let us remember, with humiliation, the description of the prophet Ezekiel: "The children of the people have spoken one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the Word that cometh forth from the Lord. But, lo, thou hast been unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for they hear thy words, but they *do them not*."

And then for the people's part. They have also to consider somewhat. Each individual of a congregation has to consider not the mere fact of his presence in a church; but in order to test his sincerity and the truth of his religion, the causes which have brought him there. He has come *to hear*. He is right—for so he *ought* to have come. But he must go on. Has he come to hear in the regular and methodical teaching of his Church, making that hearing but a portion of the duties of his presence? or has he come altogether and solely *to hear*? Has he, moreover, come with reference to the thing to be spoken, or the man who speaks it? Has he come for some novelty, or love of change, or curiosity, or fashion, or criticism, or making a judgment? Has he, in short, just done no

more than those common people who heard Christ gladly, or that Herod who heard John Baptist gladly, or that Agrippa who was almost persuaded to be a Christian? Is this, or is it not, his condition?

My brethren, I would ask you, is "hearing" the only means of grace which is to be received without responsibility? Are men to listen to preaching merely to gratify their intellect, their taste, or their curiosity, and then go out of God's House, and have no account to give to Almighty God of the result of such hearing? It remains for you to consider and reflect upon this, that the servant who knew not his Lord's will was beaten with few stripes, and that he who knew his Lord's will, and did it not, was beaten with many stripes. "Hearing" must beget (by God's influencing Spirit) some access of knowledge, and some fresh instigation to duty, every time it is pursued; and therefore, the more value you set upon the ordinance of preaching, and the more, consequently, you pursue it, consider the immense aggregate mass of responsibility you have taken upon yourselves in *hearing* so much, if, haply, which God forbid, you have *done* so little.

SERMON XIV.

DAILY PRAYER.

(PREACHED AT S. BARNABAS'S, ON THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, 1850.)

ACTS iii. 1.

“Now Peter and John went up together into the Temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.”

THE Church is continually enforcing upon us the necessity of communion with our Blessed Lord; both as a note of the soundness of our faith, and as a means of receiving such spiritual nourishment as is vital to salvation. This communion she requires to be sacramental, and conveys it to us by the two greater sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. But the Church, when she pronounces such sacramental communion to be necessary to salvation, knows the imperfection of our nature. Our Blessed Lord, being the Head of the body, the Church, knows (since He was man Himself) that we must all live in the world, partake of its cares, mix in its business, and be vexed with its troubles. But would He, knowing it, and the Church through

Him knowing it, be so hard a task-master as to say, "Sacramental communion with Me is essential, and yet you are in a world of necessity which unfits you for it"? Would this be of God? It cannot be. The Church does not call men at once, suddenly and without warning, to such a holy duty as that which is involved in the Blessed Eucharist. She furnishes her members with a preparation which runs parallel with it—a means by which, though men are in the world, they still may overcome the world, be purified from its alloy, be tranquillized amid its noise and worry—and although, as of necessity, in the midst of its desecrating occupations, still become, day by day, hallowed unto God.

The means which she furnishes are Confession and Prayer. Of Confession it is not my intention to speak now; but concerning Prayer I would desire, my brethren, to speak somewhat: I mean concerning daily prayer—the prayer of the Church, her public office, by which morning and evening she offers to God the supplications of her people. It is not meant that the congregation should be leading lives of a worldly or careless character for six days, having no opportunity to seek God in His sanctuary, and should then be pressed forward, by excitements of the moment, to her most holy mysteries, without, in the interval, any knowledge of Him in spiritual meditation, or communion with Him in any worship in the courts of His house. Far otherwise. Every day, each morning and each

evening, she desires the doors of her houses of prayer to be opened, and the presence of her priests to offer within them the sacrifice of prayer to God. Her Prayer Book is so constructed as to set before the people God's Holy Word to be read and heard by them *daily*, as their wisdom, their comfort, and their hope.

Let us consider, first, the *reasonableness* of a daily service of Prayer to be offered to God—comparing our Church with other branches of Christianity, or even with heathens. The Mohammedan, the Hindoo, the heathen of every class, the Jew, the members of every Christian Church, both in the East and in the West—they none of them confine their worship to days set apart at long intervals, such as a Sabbath or a Sunday. They have, indeed, as ourselves, some greater festivals, on which they flock, as for grand occasions, to a more solemn commemoration of their faith; but it is every day that some frequenting of their temples to pray is exacted of them as a religious duty—the Egyptian three times a-day, the Mohammedan five times a-day, and on Friday six times. As to the Jews, we know from Holy Scripture that a daily sacrifice was appointed—a lamb in the morning, and a lamb in the evening; and priests were appointed to serve in their courses, before God's altar: Prayer never ceasing—the sacrifice ever going up—His ministers never absent from their post, serving God night and day.

And the principle of this, even the natural principle of this, as developed in the heathen, is surely sound and intelligible. Why do men pray *at all*? It is because they acknowledge some superior Power, or Being, or God, in Whose Hands they are, and Who has ability and will to direct them, control, help, punish, or reward them. They seek to Him, therefore, for protection; His interposition in their affairs they search for, His wrath they deprecate, His mercy they entreat. But is this interposition, this wrath, this mercy, of such little import, that it may be thought of at long distances apart? Is it only on the fourteenth day, or the tenth day, or the seventh day, that this Power, or Being, or God, is to be consulted, or intreated, or glorified? The natural period of dividing time is the night and day. The sun marks our lives; the sun regulates our business; we appoint our times for food and for sleep by the sun. Is it not natural that the sun should also regulate our times for worship? If, then, this has ever been the case with the heathen world—if it is unquestionably the case with the Jew—if it is never lost sight of in the transfer of the Revelation of the Old Covenant into the New; but is still equally preserved—then how is the case with ourselves, when not only the greater daily sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, but even the lesser sacrifice of any public prayer, as a daily duty of the Church, has well nigh perished? Bishop Butler, than whom there could not be a closer reasoner, or one

more acutely sensitive to the truths of our holy faith, compares our scanty worship of God with that of other nations, in this view. He says—"The Mahometans are obliged to short devotions, five times between morning and evening. In Roman Catholic countries, people cannot pass a day without having religion recalled to their thoughts by some or other memorial of it, by some ceremony or public religious form occurring in their way; besides their frequent holidays, the short prayers they are daily called to, and the occasional devotions enjoined by confessors. By these means their superstition sinks deep into the minds of the people, and their religion, also, into the minds of such among them as are serious and well-disposed."

That religion should sink deep into the minds of the people is the end of the Church—that it should possess them constantly, and continually be acting in them and for them—that it should be the first and chiefest object for them to venerate, and the readiest means for them to use, this is the very highest aim which the Church could have in view. And how otherwise it can achieve this aim than by daily devotion, it is impossible to say. A church with doors shut and barred for six days in the week, will open but grudgingly on the seventh. The heart that is only directed to God's worship once in seven days, will be apt to be absorbed in the six, and forget the seventh when it comes round. Use and habit are proverbially a second nature. Let that use and habit tell so far

against the idea of public worship, that it is considered a duty but for a seventh part of a man's life, and religion will sink in proportion; but let these very same means become the conservators of the idea of the daily office—not the sabbatical—then will public worship, as a people's duty, be placed on its true principle, and take a primary part in preserving the faith.

These are arguments from reason, but I am taking a very low ground indeed when I speak merely of the reasonableness of a daily worship of God. As members of that body of which Christ is the Head, we have higher principles and deeper motives than any which can be deduced from a mere examination of what is done by others, or can depend on arguments derived from ourselves. If the heathen worships his God daily, because he thinks Him a merciful God, or an avenging God, or a protecting God, much more *we*. Surely the increased knowledge of sin, its hatefulness and its guilt, which we have from Christianity—the increased knowledge of God's wrath against sin—the enlarged experience which we have of our frailness and our liability to fall into that sin—the more accurate details which have been bestowed upon us in revelation of a resurrection from the dead, and a day of judgment, of the punishment of the wicked, and the rewards of sanctity and righteousness—these things pressing more urgently upon us, and bringing God more closely before us in the Person of His

Only Begotten Son, our fear, our gratitude, our sensitiveness of His displeasure, our hopes, our joys, ought to be surely an hundredfold increased, and therefore ought to draw us before Him with far greater assiduity and fervor than we generally find. If we know more, feel more, have received more, we ought to *do* more. If we want more, we ought to pray more.

Let us now look at our Lord and His Apostles. Let us consult the Scriptures, and see how the early Church, as instituted by Him, and living closely in Him, engaged themselves in daily prayer.

The very first account we have is of S. Peter, on the Day of Pentecost. By his sermon he converts 3000 souls. The Scripture describes their baptism, their coming out from Judaism, their separation from the world, their parting with their goods for the general service of the Church; and then it is added, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." They continued daily in the Temple. And shortly after, again, it is said of S. Peter and S. John, (as in that passage which was taken for our text,) not as though it were an unusual thing, but as if the ordinary practice of the Christian disciple, just as it was of the Jew, carried on without a change: "Then Peter and John went up together into the Temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."

You will notice three particulars:—First, It was joint prayer—not the prayer of an individual, not an accident on a special occasion, but habitual, as in company with others; many were there, both Jews and Gentiles. There were others going up with John and Peter, many others; for the lame man, upon whom they wrought the miracle there described, is said to be laid at the gate, for the purpose of “asking alms of them that entered into the Temple.”

Secondly, You will observe that it was a public and a holy place in which they met, not a private room: they went together into the Temple: it was God’s House. Their prayers were considered as sanctified, and made in a peculiar manner holy and acceptable to God, by reason of the place. And though, indeed, prayer is not confined to God’s House, for it is a duty everywhere, still it is made peculiar, it is exalted above other sorts of prayer, by reason of being offered in the especial Presence of God, the place where He dwells, where holy angels stand around us, and join in man’s worship, where Jesus Himself has promised to be in the midst of us.

And Thirdly, You will observe that it was at the ninth hour; a special and fixed time, not accidental, but a known hour, one recognised by all the people, Jews as well as those now converted to the faith of Jesus; for we find it said to be “the hour of prayer.”

Follow all this up by the account of S. Peter's imprisonment, Acts xii., when it is said, "Prayer was made without ceasing of the Church, unto God for him;" not once or accidentally, but "without ceasing," and not of individuals, or of families, but "of the Church." And when he was delivered from prison, it was the Church that he found collected together to pray. "He came to the house of Mary the mother of John, where many were gathered together praying." Follow this up again, by the repeated injunctions of the Apostles to the early Christian Churches, as in Col. iv. 2, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same, with thanksgiving;" and in 1 Thess. v. 17, "Pray without ceasing;" and in 1 Tim. ii. 1, "I exhort, therefore, first of all," (first of all, the main and principal business) "I exhort, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, for kings and all that are in authority;" and in Heb. x. 25, "Not forsaking the assembling ourselves together," (in this phrase is a direct allusion to the public assembly of prayer), "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." All these passages, together with many others, picture to us a Church distinctively of prayer, not occasional, not once a-week, not private only, but prayer upon a system, and public: and I might pursue, at any length, the

habit among the first Christians, (subsequent to the times of Holy Scripture), as developed in the writings of the fathers, but time will not allow of this now. The fact is undoubted; morning and evening public service was their invariable use; strengthening and multiplying in the hours, until we find it as many as seven times in the day, the canonical hours; but twice a-day the lowest. As they had daily sins to confess, daily blessings to be thankful for, daily praises to offer, daily protection to seek, so they met together in their houses of prayer daily, and sought the Lord with a penitent and contrite heart, where pre-eminently He was to be found.

But all that I have been saying thus far will, I am aware, be fully and readily conceded. It will not be denied that Christians in former times, the times of the Apostles, and shortly after, did worship God in their houses of prayer daily; but the reply will be, that what was proper and right in them does not follow to be proper and right in us; that we are living in different circumstances, that our habits of life are changed, that the same duties which were required of them cannot be required of us, and so forth. To this objection, as a fact, we are, of course, compelled immediately to assent. Times are changed. Christians in the nineteenth century are not what Christians were in the first, second, and third, or even far later. But is it fair to argue, that because we are not the same, therefore, our religious duties, and our privileges,

are not the same? Religion can but be religion, Christianity can but be Christianity once for all; we may alter, but Christianity cannot alter. The question is, how have our habits of life become so very different from what we read of the Christians in purer ages? It is true, life must be maintained and business pursued, nations must be governed, statesmen must have their politics, merchants their exchange, lawyers their courts, and tradesmen their shops—we must be in the world. But were there not these things in existence as necessary parts of life then as well as now? Had the early Christians no world to live in, or life to maintain? Surely we are not to fancy that the Romans, Greeks, and Africans, who first embraced the faith of Jesus, were free from the unavoidable pursuits and occupations which now engage the inhabitants of England? No; it is not the world that has changed, but the spirit of our faith and love: it is not our duties without, but our minds within. The world has become all in all to us, which it was not to them. Either our excessive toil in the things of mammon, which is called business, has weaned our affections away from God, or our great and excessive pleasures have dulled our love of Him, or our prosperity and our comforts have blinded our hearts, and made them gross towards Him. It is we, in some instances from violent and outrageous sins, in others from religious indolence, in others from superstitious fears, here from an idle priesthood,

there from a cold and chilling episcopate, or from a sleeping and worldly people, it is we who have caused the world to change, and not the times which have caused us to change: we have forgotten God (comparatively speaking) in our great domestic blessings, in our national prosperity, in the success of our politics, in the thriving of our trade, in the victories of our armies: we have forgotten God, from Whose Hands these things come, and have shrunk away from Him, and have shut ourselves up in our selfish retirement and reserve, and then excuse ourselves, and say we are different now from the Christians of the early times. Oh, my brethren, would that we were not so different! It would seem as if it required some signal chastisement at God's Hand; some plague, or pestilence, or war, or some frightful national calamity, to bring us on our knees in the houses of prayer; for certainly He of His goodness has given us all that a people could desire, and yet that goodness makes little impression on us: we pass Him by and heed Him (in many instances) as little as though He did not exist.

But another objection is made by some to daily public worship, namely, this, We *do* worship God daily in our families. To add public worship in the Church to our family worship at home, would be a useless work, and a burden too great for us to bear. To this I must rejoin, first, that worship in families is by no means universal; nay, it is very

rare. I do not suppose that there is so much as one family in ten that practises domestic worship. If, indeed, such families live at a distance from the Church, or if the Church, to which they belong, does not furnish them with an opportunity of daily prayer, then it is well, and their family worship is no doubt a substitute acceptable in God's Sight. But it cannot be said, in general cases, and where Churches are open, that family worship is a substitute for, or to be preferred to, Church worship. And there is this difficulty in the case—if family worship does supersede public worship, it supersedes it on Sunday as well as every other day, which no one would allow. For observe, in regard to Sunday, there is no command in the Evangelical dispensation to make one day a day of worship more than any other. The Sunday is, indeed, the great Christian festival—the Lord's day—and is particularly made holy, as a day of Christian rejoicing. It is the great day of the week; but none of God's commands, in regard to prayer, public prayer, refer exclusively to that day. The precepts of the Scriptures, as well as the customs of the Apostles, concern every day. They were, as I before observed, daily in the Temple.

You must, my brethren, consider the question on its real merits—you must put aside your previous ways of thinking, and examine the question for yourselves, divested of prejudices. You are a recipient of private blessings—these you acknowledge

before God in private prayer. You are a recipient of domestic blessings—these you acknowledge before God in your family prayer. But why should you, as a Christian, stop at *that* point? You are a recipient of many blessings and privileges, as members of one great family, as it is said in the Collect, the household—the Church. You have a country, a Queen, a Government, Magistrates, Clergy—your relationship, in this capacity, to your brethren at large, should be considered. To worship God only in private, or only in our households, is a constrained and cold worship. It has the appearance of a selfish reserve, and an unwillingness to remember others. Parishes are families—congregations are families. The pastor and his flock ought to be together in worship as the family of God—not several families disunited, each praying only for itself, forgetting others, having separate wants, holding aloof the one from the other—but one in Christ, one in His Sanctuary, one in prayer, as one in wants, and one in infirmities.

But again, supposing that family worship should be permitted, as a substitute for Church worship, so far as regards the families of the rich and noble; in most cases, even there, it would be an inferior sort of worship—a lay worship—there would not be a priest. And even if we were to let it pass, as in large families, where the prayers could be offered with decent solemnity, still we have left out of consideration the thousands and thousands who are

not in any such case as to be able to assemble one with another. How many there are, both young and old, and in middle life, who live single? How many live in constrained circumstances, who have no decent room which they can possibly set apart for their domestic prayer? How many who are ignorant, and know not how to pray? How many absolutely so poor as to have neither Bible nor Prayer Book, nor any form of prayer; and if they had, who would be unfit to take a lead in guiding others, not knowing what to do themselves?

I need not say to you, my brethren, that society is made up of a vast majority of these latter classes; and therefore to them—to their minds—to substitute domestic worship (which they cannot possibly enjoy) as a system opposed to, or in the place of, Church worship, deprives them altogether of the opportunity of joining in common prayer with their fellow-creatures. It is a holding out to them, by your example, a notion that to assemble in the House of God is neither a duty nor a privilege on any day but Sunday. It disjoins and separates the rich, the prosperous, and those blessed with abundance, from the poor, the solitary, and the unfortunate. It breaks up that unity of spirit and unity of heart which ought to join us all, of every kind and degree, together, as one family in Christ.

My brethren, in all that I have been saying I would ask you to remember, that I do not press the daily service of the Church as a forced duty, as

a burden; I do not press it on you as an end, as if all religion consisted in it, as if none could be religious without it; I lay it before you not as an end, but as one means towards an end. The great end is salvation. I urge, that to pray to God daily, in His House, with your brethren, and with your Clergy, may be one means towards that end; and as such I urge it on your attention, as one of the privileges of your fellowship in Christ.

And if I urge it on the attention of the whole parish at large, much more specially do I urge it now on this portion of it, and on this congregation—a congregation, as you know, exactly consisting of the very class that is most unable to provide any worship for themselves, a class of poor and labouring men, who have no time, no place, no knowledge, except what, with God's blessing, they may get here. You will remember that it is but a few weeks since this place in which we are assembled was consecrated and made God's House. It was made God's House, first and primarily, that from its Altar might be conveyed to you the sacramental communion of the Lord's Body and Blood, that precious life-giving Food, which you must ever consider as the primary object of religious veneration, and the first intention in the Christian man's worship. And so it is here fulfilled. For daily is this blessed Sacrifice offered here—no longer scantily or sabbatically, but daily. And you will remember herein, for your consolation, that by this great act of

praise and deprecation, although you cannot be present at all times, and although perhaps you ought not *all* to communicate; still you will have the satisfaction to remember, that so far do we as Priests carry the idea of a daily sacrifice ourselves, that we would realize it not only in the lowest but in the highest of the churches' offices; we would not only pray to God daily, but pray to Him by that most precious Death and Passion which His Blessed Son suffered on the Cross, recorded on this altar. We would plead our cause with God, and, in pleading ours, we plead yours by that sacrifice, that He would have mercy upon us as a people, restore us to His love, and forgive us all our sins; we do this daily, as the notice informs you, at seven o'clock in the morning. And what follows from my saying this? Why, that when we, as many Priests and Deacons here dwelling together for the service of God, have done this *our* special daily worship, always inviting and being ready for as many as can be present, we then come and offer to you, as the great bulk of the congregation, the daily service of matins and even-song. And *how* do we offer it? Do we offer it you in a scanty and cold measure? In a barren and dry land, where no water is? Is it provided for you with the mere drudgery of a reluctant service, as a duty, not a delight, as a burden, not a pleasure? No, brethren. It is provided for you with the full solemnities of a choral service, with songs of David chanted to the

ancient music of the Church; and we hope that you will all quickly learn to join in this glad melody, with the best member that you have. There is here the very highest morning and evening service which the Church contemplates. It is our delight to provide it for you, even as the highest Cathedral in this country provides it; and it shall be our pride to say that this, the poor man's Church, shall send up daily to Almighty God a service and an offering of prayer equal to that of the very chiefest in the land.

It becomes, then, imperative upon you to help us in this, by an habitual presence and an habitual participation in the offices of Prayer. "Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God; for unto Thee will I cry. My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up." Thus said David. And again he said: "In the morning, and in the evening, and at noon-day, will I pray, and that instantly." And again he said: "Seven times a-day do I pray." Surely you will not be wanting once in the day at least? Will you, as Christians, permit the Jewish David to put you to shame? For David, remember, though so very devotional and holy a man, still did but live under the inferior privileges of the first Covenant. Shall David be on his knees early in the morning, betimes in the morning, at cock-crowing and at matins, and we Christians go on slumbering and sleeping, and

care not for His glory. Whom we serve—the Redeemer and the Saviour? How will God speak to us?—“ You, who are priests of a Crucified Lord, are taking your ease when David and his priests were praying. You, who are a people ready enough to rise up early, and late to take rest, for your pleasure or your business, you will not stir a foot for the worship of your God till it be well nigh noon. Morning knows nothing of your voice of prayer, or your preaching, or your Eucharistic offering; your religion is all of an easy, indolent, matter-of-course character; you will take no trouble to worship Me, you will only do it when it is an agreeable variety in the decent occupation of a temporal rest. Where are your hearts, O ye people? where is your *love* of Me—where is your *fear* of Me? You have a cry for Me on the Lord’s day; but where is your cry for Me in the daily morning office, when your strength and freshness of worship would be the greatest, and your voice of melody purest and most holy? And where is your cry to Me at the daily evening office, when nature, sinking into rest, invites you to look to Me, and looking there for peace and refreshing sleep, consigns you to the God Who made you, and the holy angels’ guardian care, His Ministers? Where is your Evening Song? Where is your Morning Song? Where is your Noon-day Prayer? Alas, while all nature pours forth her tribute of praise, man alone is silent—and that man a disciple of the Cross!”

Let not this be said again. Let us arise and turn unto God, and put off this indolence of Religion. Let the rich shake off his luxury, and the poor his indifference; let us acknowledge daily worship to be a national duty, and the long neglect of it a national sin; let not the matin bell sound in vain, arousing you from your slumbers, nor the evening bell preparing you for rest. Whatsoever you need, whatsoever you would deprecate, here, in this habit of Daily Prayer, you will have opportunity to pour out your heart to God, and God has promised to hear. The practice will soon grow upon you, and the growth will make you strong in grace.

If you are now in any known sin, if you secretly aspire to become God's servant, if you are anxious to get rid of difficulties, to cast aside sins, to begin a new life in penitence, and know not how or when you may do so—here, in the House of God, by a course of daily prayer, you may do so. Ye that are in this sense penitents and seek for God, enter His House, and pray with your brethren and with your clergy daily. Seek God in His House in preparation, and God will be found in you in repentance. Here you will have a hallowed place for meditation, cutting you off from the world. Here you will, by the presence of things holy around you, be drawn away from the ordinary scenes which disturb or pollute you.

The very act of rising up early, and preparing to go forth from your dwelling to visit God's dwell-

ing, as the first act of the day, will consecrate the day; and at evening, when you return from your labors, again to seek God, and offer Him the sacrifice of your lips, the very act will sooth the jaded and weary spirit, comfort many a sorrow, tranquillise the restless mind, and draw it more closely to God.

I speak particularly to men—to young men—to men engaged in the necessary labor and business of this great town, whose temptations, from their age and circumstances, are very great; and I confidently say to them, as well as to all, that the more you are engaged in the world, the greater blessing will this daily service become—the more dangers you have to incur, the greater strength and protection will in this be found. The exertion you are required to perform is not much. The children of this generation make greater exertions for their god—the mammon of unrighteousness. If you are children of light, you will not be surpassed by them; if you really hate sin, you will not mind some little trouble (grant that it *is* trouble at *first*) to avoid it, or conquer it. If you really do wish to be religious, you will not hesitate because the way to become so is at first (if you are rich) a little contrary to your luxurious habits, or, if you are poor, to your general indolence. O surely not! You will put forth the exertion and the struggling of a wise combatant in the arena, “and keep under your body,” and “fight not as one that beateth the

air." Exertion is itself a victory. And so be faithful, and be punctual, and be persevering; and be ever found here saying, with David and all the Saints of God, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice."

SERMON XV.

THE WOUNDED CHURCH.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE 8TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, 1850, IN THE MORNING ; AND ON THE SAME DAY AT S. BARNABAS'S, IN THE EVENING ;)

PRECEDING THE GREAT MEETING OF THE CLERGY AND OTHERS, AT S. MARTIN'S HALL, TO CONSIDER THE GORHAM HERESY.

JEREMIAH vi. 19.

"They have healed also the hurt of the Daughter of my People slightly, saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace."

ANY wound or "hurt" which is fresh made upon the human body, either from its immediate pressure, the suddenness with which it has come, or the pain with which it is accompanied, promptly and entirely absorbs our mind. The flesh is rent; the limb is broken; the blood gushes forth—we are crushed, bruised, torn—all nature is disturbed. There is a cry of astonishment, and of pain; we look at the mutilation which we have suffered with dismay; we know not exactly where we are—and we cry aloud in our anguish. But then comes the healing process so beautifully provided by a Merciful God. The blood is stanchèd. The bones are set;

and grow together again. The wound is closed; the hurt disappears, and, by degrees,* we forget all concerning it, and subside into our former state of comfort and of health.

Sometimes, however, nature does *not* carry on her healing process quite so readily, or so surely. There is a fictitious healing. The wound is cicatrized over externally and superficially, while the mischief still goes on beneath. Unskilful surgeons sometimes bring about an imperfect healing. They heal the hurt of the "Daughter of my people" slightly. They imagine that what partial hurt remains is of little consequence. Any damage which still appears will be effaced by a little time. They pass over all idea of danger. They are unwilling to think seriously of the matter. They say, "Peace, Peace;" all will be well very shortly. Be not anxious. Be not over troubled. When lo! behind and below the superficial healing there rankles all the while the deadly poison of the hurt which they say is cured. It lies there, unperceived by the common observer, only to burst out into a flame of a fiercer magnitude, which shall devour and destroy the whole patient in a misery which he dreams not of. They say, "Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace."

And as it is in the wounds and sufferings of the body, so it is in the wounds and sufferings of the soul, the sufferings wrought by sin; we have gone on, may be, for years in some course of wickedness;

we have deviated from the known laws of God; have been addicted to the uncontrolled lusts of the flesh; have followed, with unrestrained, because unperceived wilfulness, every kind of worldly folly. And then, after a lapse of time, something of God visits our hearts—compunction begins its work; remorse—disgust with self, and we feel within us a grievous wound. Then we arise, and are full of shame and indignation; the blood flows keenly—pain, discomfiture of mind, vexation; and we cry aloud, with bitter tears of sorrow, to God: “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

But then, just as in the wounds of the body, there is a healing process provided by the Mercy of God. There are physicians to be called in here as well as there. There is medicine for the sick soul, a “balm of Gilead,” as it is said of the Prophet; there is healing and binding up of wounds; and frequently, we may say very frequently, the wounds are healed by repentance and confession. The hurt disappears—grace comes back—peace is restored.

But here, also, sometimes the wound is *not* healed, but only appears to be healed. There is a fictitious and a superficial healing which deceives. The soreness of the bruise may give way, or the pain may be lulled, or we may get used to it, so as to bear it in forgetfulness; and we begin to say within ourselves: After all it is not so bad as we thought. How much worse might it have been. I see others that have fallen into greater sins than I have my-

self, and yet they are happy; why should I distress myself? No doubt all will be well in God's Mercy. Then other circumstances intervene. Time works its healing process upon the memory; days of pleasure and delight come back; more active scenes of business and of care absorb the attention, and the struggles of remorse are conquered in the brighter scenes of the world's pomp and the world's glory. And so the patient is at peace. He fancies he is, but in reality there is no improvement whatsoever. The hurt is only slightly healed. It breaks out afresh more virulently than before. Sin triumphs in fresh temptations and fresh falls, wound upon wound is repeated, the whole body becomes corrupt, and the patient dies.

You will observe two great truths involved in this illustration. The one is, that however grievous and distressing the fact of a wound or "hurt" in the body or the soul may be, it does not at all follow that death must ensue. There is, for every wound, a healing process; a means of restoration and recovery. The other truth is, that although there may be abstractedly this healing process and the means of restoration and recovery standing by, still it requires very great skill in ascertaining whether these means are rightly applied. There may be a deception, a false appearance, an external, not a radical cure. And the obvious inference is, that where we find a wounded body or a wounded soul lying stretched out before us, we must be very

cautious how we say the patient is cured, too soon; very cautious, lest it be but slightly done—lest, while we are congratulating ourselves on his health, he becomes a corpse.

And now it will be said, wherefore all this? For whom, or what, is this illustration made? It is made, brethren, for the Church of which, in God's mercy, we are members. She is described by the Prophet under the beautiful figure of "the Daughter of my people." The Church is "the Daughter of my people;" and, as I am now about to explain to you, she has received a grievous wound, and is in great peril by reason of her enemies; wicked men have hunted her down, and set their feet upon her neck, and are trying to trample her in the dust. There are robbers and murderers round about her, and some have given her a well-nigh mortal wound, stabbing her in the dark, and leaving her there, as they would fain it were, to perish. And then she, so falling and wounded, has been found by some who have gone up and bound up her wounds, and mollified them with ointment of their own procuring; and although they have done their best, still they have done it slightly. They have deceived themselves, and deceived her, and have said, "Peace, Peace." But, alas! the wounds are by no means healed, neither is there any real peace. The wounded Church is in imminent peril still. They have said, "Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace."

All will agree in saying, that in order that "the Daughter of my people" may have health, strength, and vigor of action, she must have these two principles clear and intelligible:—

1. Unity of discipline.
2. Unity of doctrine.

Most, too, will agree in saying, that for three hundred years, and more, soundness and perfectness in these two principles has not been her mark. Being herself, confessedly as she is now found among us, torn off from the greater body of Christendom, rent apart and separated, that very rending was a wound—a wound of the greatest danger, a hurt which required the utmost skill to remedy and heal. The physicians did try to heal it; unity of discipline they endeavored to preserve, and so still maintained the ancient order of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; unity of doctrine they endeavored to preserve, and so still maintained the Articles of Faith in the three great Creeds of the Church. But, nevertheless, the head of the body, the governing power and supreme jurisdiction—where it should be, and in whom it should be vested, was an agitated question, and ever kept open a rankling sore. The temporal power arrogated to itself spiritual jurisdiction, and was rejected by the spiritual power; and some, casting off the foreign interference of Rome, because, as they said, it was unjust, and contrary to the canons of the ancient Church, found themselves, to their surprise, in the still more tyrannical embraces

of a king who knew no law but his own ungovernable passions. And this wound was never healed—only slightly cicatrized over to appearance, but never in reality. There was never any real peace.

But “the Daughter of my people” lived on, and even flourished. Her hurt was not vital; and she sent forth many illustrious children, and was vigorous through many a reign of our chiefest kings and princes. But then came another wound; her own children of the soil arose, who decried her faith and her authority altogether. They not only rebelled against her as their mother, but also against their king. The confusion was great. Neither the things of Cæsar were permitted to Cæsar, nor the things of God to God. There was no other king in Israel than the PEOPLE, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Then the Church, hurt on all sides, fell as though she never could rise again; her discipline gone, for those served in her sanctuaries who never had commission; her doctrine gone, her faith, and creed, and sacrament, alike fell tottering and dead; and her head and ruling governor, wheresoever he might be, or whosoever—either the king as supreme, or the chief bishop as the pastor and shepherd of the flock—no matter, for both poured forth the blood of martyrdom upon the scaffold-block, and died.

What then? Years passed on, in which the “Daughter of my people” languished and fell away more and more. And years again passed on, and

we saw the physicians again at work, as before. She was brought forth again, sick and pale, yet with life; and the ointments were applied, and the gashes in her wounded body bound together, and her chief pastors took their thrones again, and her priests their churches. They reconstructed her articles of faith, remodelled her liturgy, recombined her doctrines and her canons of life. They did what they could; but the wound was there still. The puritan murderers of the Martyred king left their foul marks all around and within her sacred body. The air was tainted by their poisonous breath. She was corrupt and unhealthy for many a weary day; and it was but the slight healing of the surface as before. Externally, the wounded Daughter still carried on her vital functions; but within, her fire languished, and her warmth was cold. *

She breathed on a little longer. King succeeded king, until at length one came, who, bringing with him a new dynasty, fell not well in with the "Daughter of my people," and they clashed. Then you saw the chief pastor, of his own will, ceding his throne to another, and many bishops followed, choosing rather to "fear Him Who had power to cast both body and soul into hell," and not him who, though he wielded the might, they thought had no justice in the right. Then was the hurt once more very grievous, and yet even worse than it had been; for the body was torn asunder, not only now from the rest of Christendom, but within

itself; and bishops here preached the doctrines of the old form, and there of the new—while the joint enemy of various creeds and hopes stood glorying round, waiting for the death of her they hated. But the physicians came; once more they “did what they could,” once more they tried their healing powers, pacifying disagreements, qualifying objections, combining the hostile, winning the obstinate; and it seemed well, and served its turn of one day; but, as before, the wound was never altogether healed, it was only slightly—it was Peace, Peace, without peace, in kings’ courts, and in courts of law, and in bishops’ palaces; but never quite peace in the poor man’s cottage, or the hearth-side of the parish priest. It was only slightly healed. There was no peace within.

And so, brethren, it is but an ailing patient, a half-cured wounded Church, that has been thus brought to our own times, and lies now at our own doors. For when, all along her many struggles, tyrants have pierced her through and through, and the people have torn her limbs asunder, and many false and inefficient bishops have betrayed her bleeding and wounded to the enemy—when all along this sad history she still has survived, and days of peace seemed now at length awaiting her, and extension of her faith, and strengthening of her bonds in foreign lands:—at this very moment—for so God has willed it—her old wounds are torn rudely open once more, and new ones, deep and

cutting, stand gaping wide, for our tears and sorrow of heart.

For what is our case now? In discipline—when throughout the world it has ever been thought that in the Church, as Christ's own Body, in herself and by her bishops, lay the power of spiritual mission of pastors, spiritual jurisdiction and judgment of their fitness in the ministerial office—when before this last year there never was a question but that temporal judges had no power over spiritual censures, but spiritual things were to be judged by spiritual persons—when before this last year she was ever glad, as a faithful “Daughter of my people,” to pay due allegiance to the sacred persons of kings and queens, but at the same time to think that the power of the keys was not given of Christ to princes, but to the Apostles—the power of binding and loosing not given to the crown, but to the Church—and so thinking and acting for fifteen hundred years, now of a sudden she is taught that this is an exploded theory, a vague dream—her voice, as a spiritual voice, is to be kept silent—her hands, as spiritual hands, are to be tied and bound. Those who may not possibly possess even her external faith, are to declare what that faith means, and declare it over and beyond the Church's own interpretation—even against her own solemn decision—even so as to set aside and counteract that which she, by her own court, has solemnly decreed.

What emperors or kings throughout the Church's

history have ever assumed so anomalous a position as this? What court or body of men has ever ventured to say, that, with a mere commission given them from the accident of political ascendancy, a mere human temporal commission, they can set aside that which is perpetual and divine?

Yet, my brethren, so it is. We, as priests and clergy, are under an oath, on one side, to obey the jurisdiction of the Church, and we are also under an oath on the other side, to obey the supreme power of the sovereign. We always thought that supreme power identical; we never imagined that they could be separate; we never credited it possible that a Church could contain within itself a power of judgment against itself. But now we are thus divided and brought into a dilemma, that one way or other our conscience is violated; we know not where our duty is, our jurisdiction is cut in twain, parish is set against parish, diocese against diocese, bishop against bishop, altar against altar, and very quickly it will be the case that we shall have as complete a division in the Church of England as to jurisdiction, whether it flow from the crown as supreme, or whether it flow from the Apostles and our Lord Jesus Christ, as complete a division as now there unhappily is between Rome and England.

And thus our history is brought up to the present moment, and a fearful history it is. All the schism between Puritan and Royalist, between Roman and Anglican, between the state Church and the non-

juror, is opened wide again, and the arrow rankles in her side. This is "the hurt of the Daughter of my people." A hurt which never, from Henry VIII. till this day, has been completely healed, but only slightly. Alas! why was it not legitimately and thoroughly healed then while it was fresh? But it was more especially man's compromise of the truth, and so the Church has suffered.

II. But I must speak also on the subject of Doctrine.

How much we have of late been hearing of the doctrine of "one baptism for the remission of sins"! However great our differences may have been in other matters, we had thought that nothing of the Creed could be ever reached as a matter of dispute. Whatever any of the Creeds asserted, that we thought was as the rock on which the Church was built. We did not think that with the words of the Creed, "One baptism," and with our Blessed Lord's own words, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," we did not think that, with these words combined, there could be found two baptisms—that a baptism of water was not a baptism of the Holy Spirit, and that the "Laver of regeneration" was only a laver of water, not a laver of regeneration. We did not think that Christ should have said, or be supposed to have said, "You on this side of the Church may believe that you are saved by baptism, while you on the other side may believe

that you are *not* saved by baptism." On the one hand, you on this side are at liberty to say that by the original, or birth sin, derived from Adam, every child of man is under God's wrath until he is baptized; and when he is baptized, then, and not till then, such wrath is taken away; whereas you on that side are at liberty to say, that he may be under God's wrath even after he is baptized, and *is* so, unless he have the Spirit of God. Or, again, on the one hand, you are at liberty to say that a child must not be baptized unless he show some visible token that he is fit for it, that is, his own merits are to be ascertained; while you, on the other hand, are at liberty to say, that no one can be saved by his own merits, but grace alone is given by, and originates from, God in baptism. I repeat, brethren, we did not think that two direct contradictions such as these could be propounded by men of reasoning power, as truths to be held equally in one Church, the one Church of Christ Jesus, which is the ground and pillar of truth. None of these did we, in (comparatively) a sound state of health, believe to be possible a few years back; when now, of a sudden, we have received this unexpected hurt, this grievous piercing hurt, mutilating, crushing, rending asunder all our vital powers, and laying bare, to the astonished bystanders, a scene of inexplicable confusion and dismay.

Such, brethren, is the hurt; let us now see what have we done with this hurt.

At first, according to the course of nature, while the wound was bleeding fresh, our cries were great, our hearts failed within us at the prospect which this mutilation of all that was true and good within us laid bare to our view, and we thought of many things very terrible by way of cure for the wound—such as putting a girdle round our loins, and taking a staff in our hands, and departing to some other place, where we might receive a purer welcome, and a greater chance of health; or lifting up our voices to those who had so mercilessly and so unjustly afflicted us, and begging of them justice,—and if not justice, mercy—if not mercy, anything to save us from the destruction which impended. Some met together and took counsel with each other in their haste and eagerness, and asked each other what they should do, or whither they could turn, as though the very talking of their pains and discomfitures might give a sort of healing to the bruised spirit of their minds.

And some physicians rose and said, Give a little time—nature will do its work—it is a sudden wound—when the patient has become a little used to it, she will not feel it—habit bears much. And some physicians would not even look at the wound. It was very frightful to look at closely—they had tender eyes, and, not bearing it, fled, and, flying, said, “It is no matter, better shut the eyes and see not; better enjoy what is before us, and give no heed to such an untimely discomposure of

the patient; we have pleasant things to think of in our homes, and our families, in our houses and our lands; we cannot part with the possession of these pleasant things, which of necessity we must do if we have to attend this hurt and wounded patient—let her die—no matter, if we ourselves can live.” And other physicians said:—“ Let be—let us see whether Almighty God will still retain this Church as a Daughter of His people. Here is a sign and token of life on the one hand, of death on the other. If we see that the people, with their priests and bishops at their head, filled with that courage and faith which becometh their holy office, do rise up and maintain their authority as a spiritual body to define spiritual things, and to maintain the honor of Christ in His kingdom against Cæsar and his now opposing kingdom; and then, if we hear their priests and bishops, with a confident spirit, going forth and saying thus: We will give up our goods, we will lose our rank and station, we will forfeit all temporal position, we will obey, and follow, and be crucified with our Divine Lord, we will suffer cheerfully with Him, and not betray His cause,—if God so call us, we will defend the faith at the risk even of all we hold dear.

In such case, said these physicians, watching the wounded patient, there will be a sign of life, and there will be a hope. But if, haply, the case should be the reverse—if we shall see the people of this Church, her bishops standing at the head, not making one

step in advance to guard the deposit of faith entrusted to their keeping; if we hear no voice uplifted to defy the enemy, or to comfort friends; if, in the midst of this mortal hurt, they still go blandly on, bear the same smile of complacent satisfaction, change not one token of their ordinary pleasant life, mix with men in the same unmoved composure, assume no one position of sacrifice, give up no one position of temporal advantage, but look calmly on, while the wound is breaking out fresh and fresh from the Church's heart's blood, and rending her most vital parts asunder,—if this be the case, and the great body of the people stands by with listless hands, applauds, joins in, ignores the existence of the ailment, and all around still goes smoothly on, as though no great thing had happened—then, (said these physicians,) It is a hurt unto death. It is a mortal hurt, and there is no remedy. The candlestick is removed; together with the Churches of Africa and of Asia it is gone, and men will see it no more.

I am quite aware, brethren, that these are pictures severely drawn; that they may be unpleasant to your ears, as diving down too deeply, you may think, into matters which had as well been left undisturbed. I am quite aware that it is a much more grateful task to prophesy smooth things, and to keep hard things out of sight; and that, in all human probability, the substance of these observations may procure for me a share of that remark

which Micaiah the prophet received of the king to whom he boldly spoke the truth: "I hate him, for he prophesieth evil concerning me, and not good." But the existence of the faith is a great question. The present danger—the impending greater danger—the struggles now going on for the very fundamentals of a church, must excuse more harshly truthful words than at other times it might be expedient to set before you. Some will say, You are too hasty, you prejudge the matter, time will soften down these asperities, time is requisite to consider all the bearings of this complicated question. Yes, it is quite true that time is requisite. It is quite true that time does bring comfort under sorrow, and that time does bring healing on his wings, and bind up wounds of pain; and so in one sense it is true, that sensitiveness about a wound gradually departs. And no doubt it will be so in this case; but it does not follow that because sensitiveness to pain diminishes, danger diminishes; or because the wound, by our habit of looking at it, becomes less marked to us, that therefore the wound is in itself less. We can become accustomed to any disease or pain; we can bear, by habit, the most loathsome form of wounds and sores, and heed them not, but that does not diminish the fact of their existence, or of their ultimate tendency towards death; we must judge whether the body be sound or unsound in itself, and act upon that, not upon our own habit of bearing with it, or the

idea of becoming accustomed to it. Therefore, I would say to those who advocate delay, and the effects of time, You will produce the very death you dread. It is an opiate under which you will breathe your spirit out and die.

There are others who will not go so far as this; who will not admit any real danger to the faith; who pass by the whole question as one of no consequence in its aspect, treating it with the indifference of a Gallio, or the superciliousness of a Pilate. But, my brethren, we must not be deceived in this, any more than by the previous sophistry just spoken of. To detract from the consequence of a truth is, of course, the sure way of undermining the mind, so that it care not to entertain it. But it cannot be just or true to deny importance to an article of faith handed down to us by the Church, and given to our charge in one of the very Creeds which every Christian, of every age, till within a short period back, has ever held sacred. It cannot well be held of no consequence to contradict the plain words of our Blessed Lord: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." It cannot be held a matter of no consequence, to bring ourselves in direct collision with each other in the same communion; and for some to say, I do believe in "one Baptism for the remission of sins," and others, "I do not believe in such a Baptism." It cannot be held a matter of no consequence to the truthfulness,

sincerity, and integrity of our moral character, to be placed in a position of saying direct words with our mouths, "This child is regenerate," when we really mean, "This child is NOT regenerate."

It cannot be a matter of no consequence, that, when we hold offices of leading and pastoral duty in the Lord's vineyard, we should have it a perpetual burden on our consciences, from day to day, that we must speak within ourselves thus: I, a priest of the Church of England, hold it as a truth of inviolate certainty, that Baptism has a saving grace, and has it of necessity, never separate, never separable. And yet, the law of kings and crowns of this kingdom of the world say the reverse, and by this I am legally bound; still, here I stand, receiving the goods and temporal possessions of the world, secured to me by this kingdom of the world, when in my conscience I deny its authority, reject its decrees, give no credit to its honesty, and defy its power.

My brethren, are all these things of no consequence? Have you been imagining that you have healed, or are likely to heal, the hurt of the Daughter of God's people in this way? Have you thought that, by treating the hurt as of no consequence, you were saving the patient? Let me tell you that you will behold, sooner or later, the patient dying before your eyes. You say, either smiling in ignorance, or turning aside in wilful blindness, "It is of no consequence." Well, blame not those

who have done their best to warn you, ere it be too late, and utter misery be our lot—in the separation of families, the cessation of all confidence in each other, the disruption of the whole Church, and the scattering of the people north and south, not knowing whither to turn, but flying anywhere rather than abide where truth is compromised.

But I must speak a few words to those of another class—to those who, knowing that the wound is of consequence, aware of the danger, convinced of its importance, still look on in a kind of blank despair, and see, in the thickness of the mist, no light to guide them, no principle of safety by which to move.

There is only one principle of safety—let us say it boldly, let us say it openly—there is only one principle of safety, and that is involved in an axiom so plain that no man can deny it—GET RID OF THE SOURCE OF THE DISEASE.

But, then, we have to find what is the source of the disease. The source of the disease is the great sin of ERASTIANISM; the great sin of leaning upon temporal thrones and earthly princes; the great sin of ruling the Church by reference to civil government, rather than the arm of the Lord God of Hosts; the great sin of fearing and courting the alliance of popular favor, and conceding to the voice of the multitude, as represented in the House of Commons and the Prime Minister of the day, the virtual direction of the spiritual matters of the Church, the appointment of her Bishops and the judgment of

her Doctrines—this is all embraced under the one word, ERASTIANISM. It is that which has caused all the wounds that the Church has ever yet received, from Henry VIII. to this very day. It is that which has caused the great schism of the Reformation, the Bishops of that period (being still in the Roman obedience) conceding to the arm of the state the power which their Divine Lord gave them for the Church. It is that which caused the next great wound, in the times of Archbishop Laud and Charles I., those otherwise great men falling beneath a power which they had evoked for their own destruction. Both trusted in the arm of flesh for the government of the Church; both fell beneath the arm of flesh. That arm of flesh, in the shape of the crown and its prerogatives, hurried them forward in forgetfulness of the promise of their Divine Lord, "*I am with you always*," until it changed, to their astonished vision, into the violence of the democracy and its rebellion; and though they never themselves saw the issue, yet it was equally their sin as it was their destruction. Erastianism of the crown ruled in one case, Erastianism of the people in the other; while the only power, that of the keys, was lost in the outcries of a wounded and demoralized Church.

Again: it was the same great sin that brought the third great wound—the wound of the schism, latitudinarianism, and the paralysis of every ecclesiastical function of the Church, in the reign of

William III. The Nonjurors gave you amply the note where lay the wound. Archbishop Sancroft laid his finger upon it when he vacated the See of Canterbury, and went forth the Church of England's great Confessor. It was this very Erastianism which has, from that day to this, left its cankering, consuming sore in the Church's side. This, brethren, is your great sin towards the Church of your forefathers at this present hour, with sorrow let us confess it, the seeking of the flesh-pots of Egypt; the delight in temporal advancement and temporal glory; the stay of your confidence in earthly things; the abandonment of the Church's inherent rights, in her own government, and in her own legislation, coming from Christ.

There is a temporal power, and there is a spiritual power, and in great part they are mixed and conjoined. But in this mixture and conjunction, if the spiritual power infringes on the temporal, imposes unauthorized conditions, or insists upon unjust exactions, such spiritual power is not of Christ, and ought to be deposed, and made extinct. But surely it is equally true, on the other side, that if the temporal power infringes on the spiritual, imposes unauthorized conditions, or insists upon unjust exactions, then, in parallel lines, ought such temporal power to be deposed—its supremacy being unjustly exercised, to be amended and rectified, its unauthorized assumptions resisted, and the kingdom of our Lord, ruling for the souls of men;

maintained against the kingdom of Satan and the world.

My brethren, I would speak with a more than usual solemnity to-day—when the Clergy from every part of England are about, in the course of this week, to hold a solemn meeting, to discuss these great questions of the Church's wrongs.

If we are put in commission with the Word of God, the power of His Sacraments, and of His Keys, and if we believe this power to be truly inherent in the apostolic commission, all must be given up for its preservation. If we believe that the salvation of men's souls depends on their baptism—which, where it is rightly to be had, it undoubtedly does—if we believe that the Church, being one, cannot, by any possibility, have two kinds of baptism,—and yet the law of the State, combining against the law of God, compels our consciences to admit its contradictions, for the sake of the “Peace, Peace,” with which it imagines it can heal the wounds that are gaping wide all round us,—what must be our duty? Is it patiently to concede our conscience to the keeping of the Privy Council, and yield our inherent power in the things of the Spirit, for the sake of a peace which is no peace, and a healing slightly of the hurt under which we now are groaning? The experience of the past surely must be some guide in the direction of the present. The wounds of three centuries are concentrated in this. It is the effect and joint influence of the variously

combined efforts of an unceasing foe, who, embodying himself in the great sin of Erastianism, has led the wisest and the greatest to be blind to the true service of their God, and to shrink from the suffering which God has said shall ever be the reward of the man who owns a greater Lord than the "prince of this world."

We must, brethren, go boldly forward; and, in order to cure the wound, we must destroy the instrument which has inflicted it, otherwise curing (if it were possible) this wound to-day, we shall have but another again to-morrow. Prior to giving all up, we must, however, try all; we must bring to issue, with as little cost as possible, to the peace of the community, the great question of the union of the Church with the State, as we now find that union interpreted by a tyrannical and unjust assumption of power. We must so bring it to issue, as shall determine, for the souls of the doubtful and distressed, the hesitating, and the timid, the real bearing of the great question of Regeneration in Holy Baptism; and we must be content, and fully look for, and expect, in this contest, which daily comes thicker and closer upon us, that the issue will be, as far as we are personally concerned, the flight of temporal friends, and the loss of temporal goods. But in the great day these things will not be much. In the great day, when the jewels are made up, and the accounts balanced, any loss here, any misconstruction, any hatred of the worldly, any perse-

cution of the "tyrant that boasteth he can do mischief," will be more than atoned for in the love and praise of God, and the holy angels, and the blessed company of the Saints triumphant.

In preparation for the meeting at S. Martin's Hall, on Tuesday next, it is proposed to celebrate the Holy Communion at S. Paul's Church, at eight o'clock in the morning; and, as is the daily custom, at seven o'clock at S. Barnabas's Church. I need hardly add, brethren, after what has now been said, the necessity on your part, if you love that Church of which you are professed members, that you will add to your daily devotions some special intercession for this great occasion—intercession to the effect, that in these perilous times your priests and bishops may not be found wanting in the hour of need.

SERMON XVI.

THE FINDING OF TRUTH.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE 9TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY; AND AT
S. BARNABAS'S, ON THE 12TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, 1850.)

S. JOHN xviii. 38.

“ Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?”

THE whole Jewish nation, as a nation, rejected Christ; and it is specially said, that “their heart waxed gross, and their ears were dull of hearing; and their eyes were closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should be converted, and Christ should heal them.” Truth was set before them—set before them in doctrine, set before them in practice—nevertheless they received it not.

S. Paul, the most learned and the most zealous of his order, of the strictest sect of his religion, a Pharisee, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, for many long years joined actively in the persecution of our Blessed Lord and His disciples, utterly denying that to be true which afterwards he confessed as such, but then only by miraculous interposition.

Judas Iscariot lived for a considerable time in the society and friendship of our Blessed Lord, witnessed His miracles, heard His doctrines, followed Him from village to village, and city to city; nevertheless he received within his mind no determined perception of the real nature of Him Whose disciple he professed to be; so far from it, that he actually betrayed Him to His enemies, and caused Him to be put to death.

Pontius Pilate was neither a Jew nor a disciple, but one standing aloof from the contest which agitated the city over which he presided, yet, in the trial of our Lord, as the words of the text narrate, even he, smitten by the things which he heard and saw, yet not convinced, having a thirst for enquiry into the remarkable character of the Prisoner Who was brought before him, still could not see either one way or the other, what the real state of the matter was, and so he burst out into that remarkable exclamation, "What is truth?" Something he knew it was, somewhere he knew it was, but what it was, and where it was, he could not find.

I mention these instances to show, on the one hand, how very possible it is for a truth to lie hid and not be seen, and yet still be a truth; and, on the other hand, that truth does so lie hid, not in consequence of any deficiency in its evidence, but in consequence of some distortion of the believing faculty in man; for there must be, for the perfect

establishment of truth, not only correctness in the truth manifested, and in reality the proofs brought forward, but also a correct reasoning power, and a willingness of reception within the mind of him before whom it is placed; unless both these essentials of truth be present, truth makes no advance, it lies dead and fruitless, and is as though it were not.

Again; there may be approximations to truth. In the abstract, or general, it may be recognised. Glimmerings of it may be received. There may be a feeling after it; and yet, withal, it may be indefinite, vague, seen through a distorted medium, and so never be practically, or to any purpose, retained. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, sought of our Lord places of pre-eminence in His kingdom—the one on His Right Hand, the other on his Left. In this they possessed something of a truth, but grossly perverted by a secular distortion of a heavenly glory. In the same way, at the Transfiguration, there were Peter, James, and John, of whom Peter said, “Lord, it is good for us to be here, if Thou wilt, let us make three Tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; for he wist not what to say.” Something he saw of the glory of the future world, but it was in a mist and confusion—he knew not what he said. In the same way, S. Peter, when it was announced to him, even by our Lord Himself, that He (our Lord) should suffer many things at the hands of the

Jews, and should be betrayed, and crucified, and after three days rise again, Peter said, "Be it far from Thee, Lord. This shall not happen unto Thee." The sufferings, and the death, of the Master Whom he loved, even though the resurrection was connected with it, he could not bear—he had no idea of the truth which was conveyed by those sufferings and death, namely, the Atonement for the sins of man. In spite of all the Scriptures and prophecies which he had read, in spite of all he had seen and heard in his discipleship, in spite of all the personal teaching of his Lord, he had only a glimmering of the truth after all; it was not a thing settled down fixedly in his mind; and this was further evident, and even more painfully evident, in the latter scenes of our Lord's life, where the same Apostle, before the cock crew, denied, with oaths and cursing, that he knew the Man.

Now, let us ask, whence in these instances, and many others similar, did the difficulty of perceiving the truth arise? How was it that the truth in the Person, and in the doctrine of our Blessed Lord, so manifest, so close in their very sight, failed, in the former instances, of creating any impression, and, in the latter, was so obscured, weakened, and mistaken? Not, of course, from any deficiency in the proof—for if so, we at this present day should not be here to profess the faith which we do. It arose from a cloud hanging over the mental vision; it arose from a bias and tendency towards certain ways of thinking

pre-existing in their minds. In the Jewish nation, it was their gross, carnal, and hypocritical lives; in S. Paul, it was his narrow and contracted pharisaic legal views; in Pontius Pilate, it was his cowardice and fear of the Roman law; in S. S. James and John, it was their ambition; in S. Peter, it was his unwillingness to believe, and his incapacity to understand, how the triumphant reign of Messiah could be degraded by personal sufferings and death. In all there was some special and peculiar bias. They had been trained and accustomed to certain ways of thinking; they had adopted certain habits, formed for themselves certain *moulds* into which all religious things were to be cast, looked upon all that was presented to them through a medium of their own creating; and when truth came before them in a new guise, standing out and aloof from that medium, and beyond those habits, they were unable to look upon it, it was disagreeable to them, they could not view it in the abstract, but only as connected with themselves; they could not place themselves in the position of disinterested parties, but, like the light of the sun shining through colored glass, the light of truth was conveyed to their secret mind within by rays of varied color, according to the peculiarities of the bias with which each of them was possessed.

But I should desire to show this a little more accurately. Whence does it arise that men are thus possessed of a pre-existing bias for or against

religious truths? It arises from various circumstances, over which, in their incipient stages, the possessors have no control, and, in subsequent stages, very little.

Men are divided into classes or sorts. They can be generalized, which is practically shown by our expressions—the “higher orders,” the “lower orders,” the “middle classes,” and the like; or, as when we say, the “rich,” or the “noble,” or the “poor,” and the like. Now this classification of men denotes a classification of mind, of habits, of customs, of tones of thought, peculiar to each. If we know of any individual that he belongs to this or that class or order, we can, in most instances, predicate of him, the way he will receive such and such religious truths. And this can only arise from the bias which we know and feel to be the natural product of the circumstances under which such an one is placed.

The first of these circumstances is birth—as we term it, “high birth,” or “low birth.” There is a peculiar tone in the character of men of high birth. It is not to be mistaken, high birth brings with it (speaking of men as a class) a specific mark—it stamps them with a sort of inherent pride. It is too often their mark to show great contempt for their inferiors—to place great reliance upon themselves—to assume a sort of dominion over others, by prescriptive right. Unaccustomed to feel wants, deprivations, or hardships, they are trained (generally) to

a luxurious and soft way of life, which acts and reacts upon their moral power, making them characteristically selfish.

From their very infancy, servants waiting at every turn of their will: clothing, lodging, food, springing up before their feet, without any exertion of theirs. No sooner a wish expressed, than gratified—no sooner an aversion manifested, than the object of such aversion removed. Unless God, of His infinite mercy, should send some personal chastisement from above, what chance have they of being enlightened as to the real state of their existence? So born, so nurtured, so accustomed in temporal things to gratify self, and that without perceiving it, is it probable that a religious truth, adverse to such a state of existence, should come with any prospect of a fair reception? No; it is for this reason that our Blessed Lord so frequently says, “Woe unto you rich,” and tells them that “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.” Why so? Because truth would be received by them through a distorted medium—they would have a bias. Hear what religious truth says—real truth, the truth of the Gospel:—It is necessary for a Christian to be humble, to take the lowest place—to give alms of his goods—to sacrifice himself, his property, his time, all that he has—for the sake of advancing his Divine Lord’s kingdom. It is necessary to cast

aside pleasure; to abstain from the study of carnal gratifications; to be constant in self-denial, fasting, praying, in all holiness, pureness, gentleness, meekness, obedience, as a servant of Christ. Will all that be likely, in its genuine integrity, to be received, embraced, and acted upon? No; the language with which such truths will be met will be this: "It might have been very well for the early Christians to lead such lives of self-denial, but it is now obsolete. The religion of monks is not the religion of a Christian of the present enlightened age. The Gospel is a different thing now to what it was in the time of Christ; the construction of nature shows it. God has given us bodily enjoyments; we have the privileges of rank and station to maintain—it is good for society that it should be so, and it is mere fanaticism to talk of changing the habits of the society in which we live." Such is the language—I do not exaggerate it—such is the language with which the rich, and men of rank, as a class, meet that branch of religious truth which is opposed to their peculiar ways. Their bias is against it. They are incapable of making a right judgment about it. And, alas! how many go on through life with this bias, perversely leading astray their selfish and hard hearts, until they die, like Dives in the parable, creatures of self-indulgence, with Lazarus at the door, never, perhaps, throughout a long life, having been able to find the TRUTH.

Again, Professions give a bias. The merchant,

the lawyer, the tradesman, the official man, the politician, will each have their bias, arising from the peculiarities of their position. They will not perceive this bias. If they perceived it, of course the difficulties arising from it would be triumphed over; because men of sound sense will always struggle against that which is wrong, if they perceive it; but they do not perceive it; and thus let religious truth be set before them, it will not come fairly to them—ways of business, the customs of the counting-house, the Exchange, or the office, the habit of considering the necessity of success to dignify the professional man, the desire of acquisition for mere acquisition's sake, the desire of gaining the first places and the highest prizes in life's game as the great end—all this, habitually pursued, distorts the mind, sets it astray, gives it a wrench and turn; and when the calm, gentle, retired habits of Christianity, so utterly out of such a world as this, so beyond it, so forcibly denying it, speak through the gentle yet decided voice of the Gospel, saying, "Seek the kingdom of God and Righteousness first, and these things shall be added to you;" "Love not the world, nor the things of the world;" "Cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you;" such precepts are not received. "What are they to us?" they reply; "Life must be provided for, business must be attended to, industry and labor are the duties of men." Suppose a truth such as the following were laid before them: "Labor

not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life"—how would it be accepted by them? Could they deny it? No. But they would pervert it: "we must labor for both," they would reply; which, being also a truth, they would feel happy, in their conscience, in pursuing the former alone; neglecting the latter, under the mask of doing their duty to society, their families, or themselves. Their bias against over-righteousness, or in favor of worldly industry, would blind them to the real truth contained within the precept of the Gospel. Oh! if the men of the world could but see this truth, and understand it, what blessings should we have; what endless blessings, purifying and hallowing this miserable world in which we live—a kinder and more chastened intercourse with each other, a gentle and more affectionate tone in our houses, a more devout and faithful spirit in our Churches, more equable and better balanced good in our society; Christians would not manifest, upon their careworn brows, the hard and galling work of their slavery to MAMMON and the WORLD.

III. But I come now closer to Religion and the Church. Here is a truth before us all—the Gospel, the Word of God. But we have all been accustomed to read that Word of God in different ways. Let us take, on one side, a member of the Church of Rome. He has been taught to read a translation of the Word of God peculiar to himself, and

to interpret it by rules fixed and determined to his hand; to use practices, in his devotions, in which he can see no difficulties, as in any way opposed to that Word of God, because these practices have been pointed out to him, explained and enforced by arguments based upon the authority of the Church, which he rightly, as upon a principle and by habit, venerates. On the other hand, let us take a member of the English Church. He, on his side, has a different translation of the same Word of God, and rules of interpretation concerning it in a different direction. His practices of devotion are, in many instances, different; his habits of prayer different; even his doctrine, on some material points, different. Now, all these differences arise out of the very same Word of God. Remember, both rely on the same ground, only differently interpreted. One has a bias in this direction, another in that. A disputed point arises for discussion, a disputed practice; truth must be somewhere, but they cannot agree concerning it. It is vain to talk of unity, in vain to deprecate the fierce and angry disputes which divide the whole of Christendom asunder. Each side is as confident of his own tenets containing the truth as the other; and many a bystander departs from the contest in dismay, saying, with Pilate, "What is truth?"

Now, take again the Protestant Dissenter, one who is opposed to the Church of Rome and the Church

of England equally, one who has imbibed, from his earliest years, in opposition to them both, the great dogma of liberty of private judgment in matters of faith. It is vain to dispute this dogma with him—in vain to show how in reality the existence of the Church altogether as one body in Christ is entirely cut off and destroyed, if every individual is to have this power conceded to him; how, in fact, the profession of faith by a number must of necessity involve the cession of a private right in an individual to differ from the whole; how, in fact, Scripture itself decides it for us in the type of all councils, recorded in the 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; how, in fact, it is a truth which the inspired Apostle has himself announced, “No prophecy is of private interpretation.” And though, with a fair and impartial reasoner, both propositions—namely, the infallibility of the Church, and the right of private judgment—might be shown to be true, rightly understood, and in their right places; still, in the bias of the préconceived unlimited right to judge of the faith, he would not tolerate any breach of that which he had so long cherished as the essence of his own peculiar religion. He would come to its discussion with a bias. That the Church should be the keeper and witness of holy writ—that the Church should interpret, explain, and decide upon the meaning of the oracles of God—that the Church should pronounce for him what the creeds of the Church mean; this would be with him the same thing

as the doctrine of the Papal Supremacy, or the infallibility of Rome. "What is truth?" would be a question to him long ago decided, not to be reopened. Truth (he would say in effect) is that which I myself think is truth. While the rest of the world, the whole catholic world, in all times and in all countries, has altogether failed in obtaining it, I, and my little sect, have it within our breasts secure, and not to be disturbed.

Let us take a question which affects us still more closely. The last generation was brought up in a cold neglect of public worship, both as to frequency and manner, which to us of the present day is happily fast departing. A sort of external decency was all that was maintained—a dismal formalism—opening the houses of God once a-week, and that with a stiffness and deadness, in which the devotional spirit of the faithful could find no vent. Consequently, the middle classes and the poor, and some even of the higher ranks, became open dissenters; and those who remained dwindled away in their faith, and became mere machines. The French Revolution added to this paralysis the fever of positive infidelity; and, at the commencement of the present century, the world perhaps never saw so close an approach to an entire subjugation of the Gospel by the spirit of Antichrist. But then the Church began to awaken from sleep, and strove against this spirit. First, came a mighty struggle against the mere moral system of the preachers of

that day, who treated religion as they would Ethics; and this struggle developed in its fulness the doctrine of the Atonement, causing men to arise and think of the primary cause of salvation, its means and its conditions. So things passed on for a while, till the whole community, being well impregnated with this first and grand principle of Christianity, the Church advanced a further step, desiring to engraft upon the doctrine of the Atonement the means of conveying and sustaining its grace in the hearts of the faithful, by the sacraments of our Blessed Lord. Certain of the clergy, desirous to return to the more ancient ways, put forth deeper principles as to the efficacy of these sacraments, as to the power of the Church, and as to asceticism and holiness of life. As the early Christians were found to worship God daily in their Churches, so they would have their people now to pray daily in like manner; as the early Christians were found to celebrate the Holy Eucharist at least weekly, and in most instances daily, so they would have a restoration of that celebration in the Church of England; and gradually, if God should so bless them with a fitness for it, bring about weekly, if not daily communions. As the Church in the early ages was very fond of special seasons of commemoration, making records of her martyrs and confessors, and conveying through them the great truths of apostolic teaching, they would do the same. As the ancient Church,

and the Church of England, therein agreeing, would have her Church services not merely set down in theory, but in reality, for God's praise, so would they restore this glad practice, as one derived even from the very Spirit of God, suitable for the praises and prayers of her worshippers. As the ancient Church loved very closely and affectionately the Person of her Blessed Lord, loved all that belonged to Him, loved all that was called by His Name—as they would have His Houses very beautiful, His Altars richly clothed, all that was concerned in His holy Sacraments carefully tended and minutely revered, thinking no care, no love, no zeal of affection too minute for His Honor, and not allowing that anything, however little, should be called little, when it was done in a faithful love and reverence for Him Who shed His Blood for our sins; so they would now have all things (more than of late it has been seen) in similar care, and love, and reverence, even to the smallest trifle.

But, my brethren, with what result? Have these principles been taken up and received as principles? Have men fairly, candidly, and honestly, said, Are these things so? Truth comes before them as truth. It challenges their attention. It boldly stands forth and calls for its own destruction, and would desire its own destruction, if it be *not* truth; nay, moreover, it has the warrant of Holy Scripture, that, if not truth, it will destroy itself; but yet the hearers of the truths propounded will not

receive them. They seem incapable of doing so, just, as in the other points, because of their bias.

Such things were not the custom when they were young, therefore they are wrong now when they are old. Such things are to *them* novelties, therefore they *are* novelties. Such things are apt, and have a tendency, to produce formalism in religion, therefore they are formal. Such things have an aspect of, or similitude to, the Church of Rome, therefore, because they have this similitude, they are what they seem.

And so forth. But all this, my brethren, is because of the previous bias—men cannot get to the question, “What is truth?” on its abstract merits. Popular outcry arises, and so men, fearing, shrink away from it. Great men express hostility against it; and so, loving their applause, weak men abandon it; much time, and cost, and self-sacrifice (if the things be pursued with consistency) is demanded, therefore they had better be got rid of. If the premises be granted, the conclusions are troublesome, therefore the premises are denied.

Daily prayer, constant communion, fasting, observance of days, self-examination, strict attendance to the commands of the Church—all this is a labor; it is a constant memento of the troublesome part of religion, a constant call upon the wicked to repent, a constant warning to sinners that there is such a thing as (without repentance) eternal condemnation. It is a constant beacon and

light set upon a hill, that men are not to live for this world only; it is a constant herald and proclaimer to the world, calling us, from the highest to the lowest, to become servants of God, not of men, to cast aside the temptations which they have to ambition, and high things, and self-indulgence, and currying favor with the great, and loving popularity. It tells us all, both clergy and laity, both the rich and the poor, both great and small, that the work of our lives is this, and simply this, to prepare to meet God at the great bar of judgment. And therefore it is that the moral bias within is against the reception of such truths, and they are denied.

Now, I put it to you, my brethren, to consider these things as honest men, and to say whether (owing to the reasons which I have mentioned) it be not for any of us a very difficult thing to say, "What is truth?"

You see how many things there are against you; alas, how many! There is the bias of your birth and your rank thereupon attending; the bias of your education and early years; the bias of your professions and worldly callings; the bias of your present habits and society; the bias of the world in which you live externally; the bias of your natural mind, which rules you internally. You judge of truth with all these prepossessions against it. You judge of it, in many instances, without perceiving that you have long ago prejudged it; you are led by a thousand secret motives of which you are not

aware; so you reject your religion, with Pontius Pilate, or you betray it, with Judas Iscariot; or you would have it without its sufferings and its shame, and its low estate among men, with S. Peter; or you must needs have it, with its glory and its grandeur at once, with SS. James and John. Oh! my brethren, we are indeed, in many things, but puppets, moved about by wires, of whose springs we are profoundly ignorant: I mean, the secret impulses and corrupt tendencies of our weak and inefficient nature. We hardly know ourselves, why or how it is that daily we are rejecting truth when God is putting it before us; we are not aware that we are rejecting truth—we neither perceive it, nor know even of its existence, when it is close round about us, and ready, at every step, to be received.

Well, but you say, If that be so, how can I ever obtain it? If I am a creature thus of bias and prejudice, and if I am in myself unable to find it, what must I do? Our Blessed Lord will tell you: "I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now; howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth shall come, He will guide you into all Truth." To be guided into all truth! To know exactly, and without possibility of doubt, or being wrong, the things we ought to do, and the things we ought not to do; the things we ought to believe, and the things we ought not to believe; to have a course of duty marked out, which cannot be mistaken; to see the reason and the end of all that is round about us; to

feel certain that we are pursuing that end, and pursuing it by the right means; to have straight before us one clear, definite, broadly marked line—not God and Mammon together, not halting between two opinions, not Baal to-day and Jehovah to-morrow; no, none of these confusions, hesitations, misgivings, anxieties, doubts, but one unmixed, unchanging, undeviating path, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left. No darkness, nothing but light, manifest light, a bright light, a light of God's own making and giving. All this described under the one word, TRUTH. O, my brethren, what could be for us, miserable sinners, a greater boon than this?

And yet this boon is promised to us of God—the gift of the Spirit, and so expressly called the Spirit of Truth. Not ours, not our own making, but God's: "Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you unto all Truth."

And to gain this, to place ourselves in the way of it, there is Prayer, and there are the Blessed Sacraments. We must pray, not only for ourselves, but each other; not only for those that agree with us, but those that are opposed to us—all the various ranks, all the various sects, all the various schools of theology, all the various parties of faith. We must pray for each other, that all being sincerely in search of Truth, all may find it; may have His Wisdom to guide us, His Wisdom to shape and mould our minds, His Wisdom to take away the

clouds that hang over our vision, and make us blind; His Wisdom to say where we had better go, what we had better do; His Wisdom to make us charitable and loving to each other; more thoughtful, less hasty, less confident in ourselves, less certain that we are right, more open to the possibility that we are wrong; and when there is any question of Religious Truth for consideration, let us not pronounce about it at once, but PAUSE.

SERMON XVII.

THE GOSPEL HID TO THE LOST.

(PREACHED AT S. BARNABAS', ON S. MATTHEW'S DAY, 1850; PARTLY AT THE EVE, AND PARTLY AT THE HOLY EUCHARIST.)

2 COR. iv. 3.

"If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."

IN the commencement of the epistle of this day S. Paul alludes to the labors and difficulties of the ministry of Jesus Christ. He speaks of the many sacrifices which the Apostles had to endure, the many temptations which they had to withstand, but says that they had, as a body, triumphed over them all; he speaks of their having "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, of their not walking in craftiness, and not handling the Word of God deceitfully, but commending themselves to every man's conscience in the Sight of God." S. Matthew, the last of the Apostles who was called, but the first to place in writing the record of his Divine Master's doctrines and life—the last Apostle, but the first Evangelist—he, in a conspicuous manner, had "forsaken all, risen up, and followed Christ;"

but all had done so in their separate spheres, fearing no power, flinching from no persecution, but bearing cheerfully the reproaches and terrors of men. Feeling that they had received mercy, and that God had committed unto them the Gospel of His Son, they had faithfully preached His Word, according to the "truth as it is in Jesus."

The Apostle, having thus alluded to the labors of the ministry in making the Gospel known to their brethren, then alludes to the issue and result of that preaching. For as they had a duty to perform in faithfully preaching it, so had all men a duty to perform in faithfully receiving it; and he alludes to this result as a contingent one: "If it be hid," which means, it is possible that, after our making it known, after all our faithfulness in publishing it abroad, after all the light with which Almighty God has vouchsafed to visit the benighted world, spreading his revelation among the nations, still it may be hid—not hid on God's part, but hid on man's part—hid, owing to the hardness of men's hearts, and their unwillingness to see the light, because their deeds are evil. It is to this contingency that the Apostle alludes in the first part of the text, "If it be hid," and then he follows up the contingency by stating the consequence, "If it be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."* The essential

* The same doctrine of the free offer of salvation by our Heavenly Father, and yet, withal, man's responsibility in accepting it, is set forth in Sermons I. and II.

nature of the Gospel is, that it is an offer, an announcement coming from God, and that its reception with man is on *his* part voluntary. Two agents in the work of religion are engaged, as in husbandry; the seed, and the soil which receives the seed: or in the existence of light—not only the fact of its having a power to give light “to them that are in the house,” but also the fact of those within the house setting “the light upon a candlestick, and not under a bushel;” or salt—not only the existence of salt and its purifying power, but the fact of the application of the salt to the subject upon which it is to act. In short, and to make what I mean plain, although the Gospel of the Blessed Son of God is unquestionably here among us, although His light shines through the world, although the salt of His doctrine is ready to season and purify the sacrifice of our hearts and lives, still that mere fact is not enough; there must be something in us, there is a part for us to perform. Do we know of it? Do we accept it? Do we believe in it? Do we act up to it? It is by no means certain that we do: it is a contingency; we may do it, or we may not. And this contingency is expressed in the text, “If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.”

Now, there are a great many reasons, and a great variety of manners and degrees, in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is hid.

To some men, indeed, it seems disclosed and

open altogether, giving light like the bright shining of a candle, steady, consistent, and enduring. To others there is a partial, flickering, and deviating light, never in one stay, very brilliant to-day, quite extinguished to-morrow. To others, again, such gross darkness seems around them, such a thick and impenetrable cloud of sin, that you would say, "There is no light whatever of the Gospel shining here. It is altogether hid." Now, these various degrees of light are beautifully represented to us in the parable of the sower of the seed. The seed first fell on stony places, and the fowls of the air devoured it up. In this case the Gospel was hid immediately and altogether. And the cause is stated: "The hardness of man's heart." God of His mercy offers it. It is seen, it is known; but there is no warmth of heart, no feeling of affection towards the Giver of it, no love for the extraordinary mercy of God in sending His Only Begotten Son into the world, that He might say, "I am the Light of the world;" consequently it is known and understood, just for a moment, in the intellect, but is it hid altogether from the heart.

In the second degree the seed fell on a scanty and insufficient soil, and, while it takes root, it has no depth of earth from which to receive nourishment, which describes the superficial and transient nature of the light admitted within the minds of some. It burns up for a moment, there is a smart and crackling flame as of burning stubble, but

there is no solid nourishment wherewith to continue the flame. It is consumed and exhausted; and dies out quickly, and thus becomes hid.

Thirdly, The seed fell among thorns; it grew up and flourished, but was eventually choked by the equally flourishing thorns which grew up in parallel strength along with it, which depicts the strength of those temptations by which it has pleased God to surround us—riches, and rank, and business, and cares of this world. There is a light clearly within us, to start forth in the world's race with a faithful and good knowledge of God's Will; we mean well, intend to show forth the fruits of our knowledge and faith in a righteous life, but some temptation comes which we had not expected; we become immersed gradually in an increasing pursuit of the things of Mammon, and at last forget God. Many an effort there may be to retain the knowledge which we once have achieved; many a struggle there may be not to part with all the light, to retain some of it, to have at least an alternation of it, with the darkness of the world. But no, certain is it found that the thorns in the end prevail. As the darkness increases, the light decreases; as we love the world the more, we love God the less; as we make fewer and fewer struggles to retain the light, so more surely, and with less deviation, does the light recede, until, as it approaches its final departure, it is accelerated with an increasing ratio of swiftness, and finally and

irrecoverably perishes. In examples of all these different ways in which the Gospel is hid, the Scriptures abound. Of the first, the stony heart, we find Felix and Agrippa: for Felix heard S. Paul preach, and thus the Gospel was made known to him: "He trembled when he heard of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." So he had light, yet he never became a Christian. He did not pursue where the light was leading him, so the light was hid. And Agrippa heard S. Paul preach; the Gospel was disclosed to him; nay, so far was it, that he said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian;" yet he never quite became so—hardness of heart hid the light which was offered to him. So, of the second case, we have examples, in Judas, who, when he knew and followed Christ, yet fell away from Him, and became His betrayer; in Ananias and Sapphira, who professed themselves Christians, yet, in the hour of temptation, lied unto the Holy Ghost. And of the third case, we have many examples, in a lower degree, in Martha, who ministered unto Christ, and was a faithful and affectionate follower, yet was cumbered about much serving, and received our Lord's rebuke; in the young man, who would follow Christ whithersoever He went, yet being told that the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air nests, yet the Son of Man no where to lay His Head, fled away discomfited; and, in a greater degree, in the rich lawyer, who came unto Christ and said, What shall I do to

inherit eternal life? yet when told (having kept all the commandments from his youth upwards), "Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come follow Me," went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. All these are cases in which the Gospel, with all its beauties and blessings, its rewards and glories, fails to become known, in its fulness and perfection, to the human heart. It is offered to all. It is proposed by God's ministers, as the merciful tidings of salvation to all; we come to preach it upon the tenure of our office; God, through His Church, proposes it, holds it up to their view, places it within their reach, and says, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat; yea, come ye, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Man, then, must carry on the process for his own part; whether he will hear, or whether he will forbear, is his own work. If he hears, God will add fresh and fresh grace, and furnish fresh and fresh assistance, the abundant means which (being Almighty) He has within His power. If man, on the contrary, forbears, holds back, or receives unwillingly, then the Holy Spirit, Which would have been his light, becomes extinguished within him—"The Gospel is hid."

Thus, then, brethren, you see the meaning of the Gospel being hid. It is the failure of men to carry on its work. The Gospel is a light which is meant to lighten every man that cometh into the world;

but men extinguish it of their own hardness or wilfulness. In the first reception of it, by want of faith, they extinguish it, for they will not believe it; in the pursuit of the objects to which it points, they extinguish it, for they will not obey it.

Now, in the parable of the seed to which we just now alluded, you will observe that there is no praise given, as though the seed had attained its intended object, until we come to the last portion of it; and in that portion it is said, as the peculiar excellence and test of its goodness, that it fell upon ground, and brought forth fruit. Its falling upon good ground shows a right reception; but that which fell among thorns had a right reception also; for it had good ground—the only impediment lay in the thorns which cumbered it. The point of difference between the two is not the ground in which it was received, but its issue in producing fruit.

And so, in the Gospel being hid, though it achieve the first process, and be well received, even yet in the other process it may be hid; for if, after its reception within the heart, there be not in the life an energetic and vigorous produce of holy actions, a steady and determined abstinence from the gratification of those things which God has forbidden—if there be not in all things a taking up of the great sign of the Gospel, the cross, a crucifying of the flesh, a crucifying of ourselves unto the world, and the world unto ourselves—if this be not the fruit of the reception of the seed, some thirty, some

sixty, some an hundred fold,—then the Gospel has failed in that which God intended it to be—it has fallen short of the expectations of the householder, Who, when He planted His vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen, unquestionably did so with an expectation of gathering in the vintage. Expressions of the mouth, swelling words of admiration, good intentions, performance of outward ceremonies—all this is not the Gospel. For this very reason were the Pharisees rejected, and the Scribes and Lawyers suffered the rebuke of the Meek and Lowly Jesus. They had the opportunities of knowledge, and neglected to use them. They had the light shining around them, but they only received its rays on the superficies of their character, through a distorting medium, and on a surface which had no reflection. It did not penetrate within. Outsides of cups and platters they were skilful in washing, but the interior they left as foul as ever; over-ground they walked nicely tended, and with paths and gardens beautifully laid out, but underneath they preserved the same sepulchres and dead men's bones as ever. Have you not seen the light of God's glorious sun shining far and wide, and transforming all nature's works into a bright and luminous creation—each surface reflecting light upon the other, and nothing left dark—a bright and beautiful sight, which your eyes were fond to gaze upon, and would never leave? So it was, or may be to you; but let me take you down here into this noisome prison

cell. Here lies a wretched felon, shut out from all that God has shining in the realms above. He has violated some law of God or man, and there he lies, with prison bars his only contemplation, and dark foul walls the limit of his miserable vision. What is the value of that beautiful light without to him? It is no light to him; shine as it may to others, it is no light to him. Bright landscapes of wood and water, mountain and lowly valley, bright colors of flowers and foliage of trees, and clear azure sky above, far extending into the regions of light impenetrable to the keenest eye—all is nothing, worse than nothing to him; the light is hid, and he sees it not. That light of God's glorious sun is the Gospel of the Blessed Jesus: that prison cell is the world, and that prisoner is the natural man.

We must next consider the consequence of this state—"It is hid to them that are lost." However great may be the Attributes of God, in His character of a Merciful and Loving Parent, yet we must be careful how we divest Him of the attributes of a Righteous and Omniscient Judge. "His mercy endureth for ever," is the expression of the Psalmist. "God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient, and God is provoked every day." It is quite true; but however patient He may be, there will come a time "when, if a man will not turn, He will whet His sword; He hath bent His bow and made it ready." Thus it is that the light of the Gospel, though God does not suffer it to be extinguished in any man AT

ONCE, for He is merciful, and admits many pleas for repentance—though He looks anxiously for the return of the prodigal, and the tears of the Magdalene, and will not break a bruised reed, nor quench a smoking flax—still, there must be some time, when all mercy proving useless, and all overtures rejected, utter condemnation must be the result.

Loss is the contrary or opposite of these three things—possession, preservation and security. That which delights us, and is valuable to us as property, our own, in our keeping, the contrary of that is loss. That which we feel ourselves to be in, being surrounded by inveterate enemies, encountering their malignity, and being subject, at any moment, to their attacks, and still nevertheless being perfectly safe, the contrary of that is loss. That which we feel in the passage of a perilous course—by land, the thunderstorm; by sea, the hurricane; a precipitous descent, a vast height, from which we must plunge into some abyss below, and having felt it long, and with great fearfulness, are now delivered from it, and placed in a state of security—the contrary of that is loss. When the Apostle, therefore, speaks of the Gospel being hid to them that are lost; he means that they have come to that state in which all further hope of their salvation is taken away. Their enemies have prevailed—they are in a state of irremediable danger—they are abandoned to destruction.

Some persons have held that, although they have

not the gift of faith, and do not subscribe to the Creed of the Church, still, in their natural good works, their moral and virtuous character, they might be saved; setting little price by the doctrine, to them humiliating, of the Atonement of the Son of God. They might say, this evangelical doctrine is but an imagination; God will reward virtue, and if I am virtuous, I shall not be lost. To this we answer, that whatever may be done in God's great mercy, towards the heathen nations, who have never known Christ, but still have lived up to the light of reason with which God has blessed them, we need not pronounce an opinion; but the Gospel cannot be said to be hid from them, for it was never manifested. The expression, "hid," distinctly refers to such as have had an opportunity of knowing Christ, and to none others. Now, to such all Scripture is decisive, as to the impossibility of human endeavors being acceptable in the Sight of God. Though fully asserting the necessity of good works, as just now set forth, yet the necessity of justification, through the Merits of Christ, is paramount. But the Merits of Christ cannot be pleaded by one to whom the Gospel, being once offered, is hid. It is a contradiction of terms.

Again: if men do not positively assert that they can be saved by the merit of their own actions, still they may have such a pride and satisfaction in these, as to weaken their faith in Christ; they may wish to share with the Saviour the price of their

salvation. Even to such "the Gospel is hid;" and, if they persist, they are lost.

There is no salvation offered, on any terms, save those of a full and implicit withdrawal of any claim of merit for ourselves; a full, and implicit, and unreserved reliance on the Merits of Christ. When the Jailor at Philippi asked how he should be saved, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," was the answer. And again, S. Paul says, "We are saved by grace, through faith." And again, "Christ is made unto us righteousness, and we are made the righteousness of God in Him." "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the Name of Christ Jesus." So that, in whatever state of moral virtue a man may be, as mere moral virtue, if the Gospel be hid, and those peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, which constitute its essence and efficacy, if these be hid, or not recognised, or impartially developed, then he is LOST. He has no other possible resource, or help, or light—frustrating the grace of God, and making Christ of none effect—salvation is gone. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the Only-begotten Son of God."

Now, are all these mere words? Are we to talk of safety or loss, salvation or condemnation, as mere ideas?—have they not reality? And if they have, what is it? S. Peter asks the question in chap. iv. of his first epistle, "What shall the end be of those

who obey not the Gospel of God?"—meaning in the question, to assert the nature of some punishment as the end, some heavy and fearful punishment. But S. Peter, asking the question, is answered by S. Paul in another place—"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." If the loss consisted merely in a deprivation of those bright and glorious rewards which are promised to the righteous; if it were only a casting out from the society of God, and His holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, this, even this would be enough to prevent any man from heedlessly rejecting the proffered Mercy of God; but when, in addition, we find, all through Scripture, sensible and real inflictions of pain, both mental and bodily, as the undoubted punishment of the faithless and the wicked, what can we say of the folly of that man who will not examine that which is set before him as God's message, or, if he does examine, will not believe it, or, if he will believe it, does not abide by it?

Therefore, my brethren, let us apply this to ourselves; let us consider whether the Gospel is hid to us—for, if it be, we also are lost.

But how may it be hid? A thing may exist

close to us, and we not know of it, and so it will be hid. Blessings and privileges may be near, but we, being blind, may not see them, and so they may be hid. It is remarkable that in the case of our Blessed Lord, the whole of His early life was spent among those of His kindred, and yet no one of them perceived in Him that which He really was. "Is not this the Carpenter's son?" they said, not knowing that it was Christ. They who were nearest to Him disbelieved Him most. In His own country He could not do many miracles, because of their unbelief; and yet there He was marvellously testified to them, preaching to them, living such a life of holiness, and goodness, as one would have thought must have attracted their attention. But it was not so. He was hid from them; "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." So in those things which now are among us, those things which are His representatives on earth.

I. Take, for instance, His Church. There is among us now "His Body," the Church—one would think visible, striving against sin and the world, preaching against the devil and his works. His ministers and ambassadors in this body set forth that which He set forth, intercede for Him, beseech the people for Him, and, in a sense, by their authority and office derived from Him, represent Him. But to how many is this hid? How many do not acknowledge anything concerning it, consider it as a vanity and a folly, a mere device of

priestcraft? Yet He said, "He that heareth you, heareth Me, he that despiseth you, despiseth Me, and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me."

Take, again, His Scriptures—external paper and print—words and sentences stand forth clear and legible, and they lie upon our tables, and they are sometimes read; their truths, as of God, and representing God and His Will, are unquestionable, and they are held forth and spoken of. But their power to regulate life, their virtue to modify and direct the heart; the inward voice which speaks of God, is not, by the mass of readers, believed or recognised. How do I judge of this? Because nothing is done in consequence of the reading. There is no reality corresponding with the representative of God which is before them. How can this be? Not only from this fact, that while there is visible and plain the external form, the Scriptures are, in their efficacy and spirit, hidden from such men.

Take, again, His Poor—the humble, the unknown, the lowly, the "children" of religion. They, again, are Christ's representatives, and are among us; for he says, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My Name, receiveth Me;" and He says of the afflicted, the sick, the weary, and the prisoner, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it not unto Me." But how few recognise this? Behold the greater portion of the rich and the worldly expending all their care, their study, and their wealth, upon their own wants,

not His. Not because they are purposely faithless, but because they do not *see* Him. And they go on never seeing Him, answering at the Day of Judgment (as if they had passed all through life with this great truth completely hidden from them), "When saw we Thee an hungered, or thirsty, or sick, or in prison?"

Take, again, His Ordinances. We are specially told that the great sin of unworthily receiving the Blessed Sacrament is "not discerning the Lord's Body." He is there—He really is there. The virtue of that Holy Sacrament consists in HIS PRESENCE. Multitudes are taught this; and are told that so to look upon Him, and so to partake of Him, is necessary to their spiritual life and sustenance. Yet, you cannot but see from how many souls this is hid by their habitual departure from the Lord's House immediately that the Holy Sacrament is about to be made ready. How strange it is that they remain habitually in His House for two hours to pray, profess, and hear; and then, the very moment something is to be done to show the fruits of their prayers, the reality of their professions, and the value of their hearing, they depart: when Christ the Lord is most present, "not discerning Him." We cannot attribute this to any personal disrespect of Christ, or any special disbelief of Christ; God forbid. On the contrary, in some cases it may be a proof of retirement, distrust of self, and humility; but whatever it be in its imme-

diate mistaken cause, its remote cause is, that the truth of sacramental grace, in its highest sense, and the Presence of Christ the Lord in the Sacrament, is hid from them. It is a thing of which they have no cognizance, a thing in which they place no real belief. They do not *see*, that, in doing certain things commanded from without, there can be any efficacy within; that in drinking wine or eating bread, consecrated by a Priest in the words of the Lord, there can be any efficacy. It is a light which, however it may shine out and be clear to one or two scattered about among the congregation, is hid from the rest; and it is just as though heaps of gold, and the richest of treasures, and the costliest of the things of men, were placed upon the altar of the exchange, and the merchants of the world, and the avaricious, and the covetous were to go there and worship for two hours, and say they longed to have gold, and seize upon treasures, and yet, so saying, were to depart, not stretching forth a hand to take what was before them. We might not doubt the power of their will, but we should doubt the power of their vision. My brethren, the case is very clear. It is the work of Satan in man's heart, corrupting and drawing him off from God. The words immediately succeeding the text assure us of this; for the Apostle expressly says, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who

is the Image of God, should shine unto them." The manifestation of the Light is in Christ—the obstruction of it in Satan; and if we submit to this obstruction of it, then the loss is in us. And there is nothing further to be done—no other revelation, no other Gospel, no other Saviour. It might be urged, if we had more light we should see. What more light could there be? You remember the saying of Dives, when he, having shut his eyes against the light, was placed in the torments of hell, and said, pleading for those who still remained on earth, "Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they would believe." To which it was replied, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead." You have every evidence, every call, every inducement, every warning. You have graces, privileges, blessings. The Church, Christ's Own Body, containing all within it that can have either power or benefit for man. If you want more than this before you can be induced to see the light which shines round about you, you have God's Word for it, that blindness will be your lot for ever. If, after all that is manifested, the Gospel still continues hid, to Satan you may attribute your inability to see—but the loss will be yours.

SERMON XVIII.

THE HOLY ANGELS.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE DAY OF S. MICHAEL AND
ALL ANGELS, 1850.)

HEBREWS i. 14.

*“ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister
for them who shall be heirs of Salvation.”*

ACCORDING to the Collect of the day, we learn that the holy Angels have a double office to perform, one to “ do God service in Heaven,” the other “ to succour and defend us on earth.” The exact nature of their being we do not learn; but it is apparent from Scripture that they hold, in analogy with their office, a nature mid-way between man and God. They were created beings like man; for though they are not mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis by name, yet we read in the second chapter—“ Thus the Heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them;” and it is said in the book of Job, that “ The morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy.” But though created, they were not created with visible and earthly bodies,

or with visible and earthly relationships, like man; for we read, (S. Mark xii. 25) that in the future world we are neither to marry, nor to be given in marriage, but are "like the Angels which are in Heaven;" they were created with spiritual and ethereal bodies like God—with wisdom they were created, and holiness, and purity, and great power, and swiftness of motion, so as to be like God; but yet capable of falling, and incurring God's wrath (as some did) like man. Their knowledge, too, was very great, as is the knowledge of God; but yet it was definite and prescribed, as is the knowledge of man—for we learn that the Angels desired to look into certain things about man's salvation; and S. Paul says, that "now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the Church, the manifold Wisdom of God;" so that the Church, which is of God, containing man, imparts to the holy Angels God's wisdom.

All this shows the peculiarity of their nature, as taking a place in God's works above that of man; and yet, in one sense, man is above them, for the Son of Man, Jesus Christ our Lord, as Man, sits at the Right Hand of the Majesty on High; as it is said by S. Paul to the Hebrews, that "He was made better than the Angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name than they; for unto which of the Angels saith He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee; of the Angels he saith, Who maketh His Angels spirits,

and His ministers a flame of fire; but unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom;" and then he sums up all by describing the office of these holy beings, tributary to God, and ministering to men—"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

But I said that their office was double, ministering for man to God, *i.e.*, serving God and succouring man. Let us recount some instances, from holy Scripture, in which this appears.

I. In the first place, Serving God. It was by the mediation of Angels that the Law was given on Mount Sinai. Thousands of them there attended God, ministering to His glory, when He appeared to Moses in the Mount. Thus David says, in the Psalms: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels, and the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place." And S. Paul (Gal. iii. 19) says of the Law in the same manner, "That it was ordained by Angels, in the hand of a Mediator;" and in the Hebrews, in the same way, he calls it, "the words spoken by Angels;" and in another place he says, it was given "by the disposition of Angels." Angels, then, even thousands, attended upon the Lord Jehovah, in that great and terrible manifestation of His glory. There, by their voices and their sounds going forth to the children of Israel, the Law of God was first made known to

man. But just as, in the delivery of the Law, Angels ministered before the Lord Jehovah, so in the approach of the Gospel, the birth of the Son of God, Angels ministered again; for “suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the Heavenly Hosts, saying, Glory be to God in the highest, and on the earth peace, good-will towards man;” and all through His life here upon earth Angels ever attended, directing the course of events to His glory—as in the warning to Joseph and Mary to flee into Egypt, and to return; in His Temptation, in His Agony, in the rolling of the stone from the Sepulchre, in communicating to the women, and to the disciples at different times, the facts of His Resurrection; and above all, in His glorious Ascension. At one time He specially appeals to these, His ministers, as ready to defend Him, were He to desire it: “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of Angels?” and to the like effect S. Paul speaks, as though the holy Angels ever kept the court of the King of kings, and where He was they were His attendants: “I charge thee, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels;” and again, He enumerates them as of necessity among the company of the Church triumphant, and he says, that “ye are come unto the general assembly and Church of the First-born, unto Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable

company of Angels." (1 Tim. v. 21, and Heb. xii. 22.)

Nor have we yet concluded; for there is a time still future, when again, in the terrible glory of the Lord, Angels shall come to minister. At that great day, when the universal resurrection shall take place, the Angels shall be God's ministers to sever the wicked from the good; it is the Son of Man, and all the holy Angels with Him, that shall come in glory to judge; and S. Paul says, that the "Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His holy Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God." And yet once more, in that magnificent description, which S. John gives in the Revelations, of the glory of God, in the opening of the sixth Seal, it is the Angels who principally contribute to that glory; for it is said, "All the Angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God."

II. So much, then, for the first part of their office—the doing God's service. Now for the second—the succouring and defending man. When Jacob went on his way to return from Laban, the Angels of God met him; and when Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's Host." They were sent to defend him on his journey, and in his meeting with Esau. (Gen. xxxii.) When the children of Israel fled from Egypt, it was an Angel of God that was sent

to conduct the camp of Israel, and he led them in the pillar of cloud and fire to the Red Sea. When Elijah fled from Jezebel, and gave himself up to death in the wilderness, it was an Angel sent from God that said unto him, "Arise and eat." (1 Kings xix. 4.) When the king of Syria sent his army of chariots and horses to apprehend Elisha at Dothan, his servant, arising early in the morning, found himself encompassed with an host, and giving himself up for lost, he said, "Alas, my master, how shall we do?" But the prophet, seeing the holy Angels round about him, answered, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be against us;" and so he was delivered. (2 Kings vi. 17.) When Sennacherib wrote his blasphemous letter, and defied Hezekiah, and his army, thought to be invincible, surrounded Jerusalem, it was an Angel, in answer to the prayer of Hezekiah, that smote, in the camp of the Assyrians, in one night, an hundred and fourscore and five thousand, and Jerusalem was saved. (2 Kings xix. 33.) It was an Angel who went down into the waters of the pool of Bethesda, and made them efficacious in the cure of the diseases of the people. It was an Angel who delivered the Apostles when they were imprisoned by the High Priest, and S. Peter, when imprisoned by Herod;—that set free S. Paul and Silas at Philippi—that protected and comforted the former in his shipwreck at Melita. It was an Angel that visited Cornelius, and comforted him, and led him

to S. Peter—that suggested to Philip to instruct and baptize the Ethiopian Eunuch; and to show that their services continue even to the future world, it was an Angel that carried Lazarus to Abraham's bosom. These instances will be enough to show, as Scripture facts, the interposition of Angels in the affairs of men, defending them against enemies, supplying them with what is requisite in their need, and leading them, in their distress, to sources of comfort and joy.

We must be clear, then, in our belief in the holy Angels—in the offices of their ministration towards God, in their services towards man; and there must be no difficulty in the way of this belief because it is beyond our power to explain the method or the order of it. We cannot tell the order or the method of the creation; we cannot explain the nature of the brutes who live around and with us, partly serving us with their labor, partly our food; we cannot tell the order or method of the resurrection—how our bodies, long since dead and corrupted into dust, shall rise again, endued with life; we cannot tell the mystery of the saints, who live in their exalted and purified state, beholding us on earth, themselves unseen; we cannot tell the mystery of the Sacraments, wherein graces invisible are conveyed, and the Spirit of God passes into the spirit of man; and yet all these things we are called upon to believe as articles of faith. The fact is, what we have to deal with, the method and

the order, is for God to reveal when He shall so will. But this we know, as we may have gathered from what has already been said, that the care of the Angels over men, and their intermixture with human things, is exercised both on the grandest and the most minute scale, just as nothing is too great or too little for God. On the grandest scale—in the control over, and presidency over, nations, over armies, over hosts of men; in the most minute—as in the case of little children, who seem to be the special objects of their love; nay, not only over classes of beings, but over each individual. We may think and believe that each one of us has his guardian Angel, one appointed of God for his special care and watching, and we may believe that this guardian Angel is ever round about and with us—that he is flying hither and thither on perpetual errands of love for us—that he never slumbers or sleeps himself, but is ever by and with us, hovering round, when we ourselves sleep, to keep off evil spirits, and cause us to sleep in peace. All this we have reason to believe, in the facts of the Archangel S. Michael contending for the body of Moses, and again contending with the Dragon and his Angels; in the fact of S. Gabriel appearing to the prophet Daniel, and interpreting the vision, on the banks of Ulai, concerning the ram and the he-goat; in the fact of S. Raphael conducting Tobias on his journey; and above all, in the fact which is given in the Gospel of the day. Our Lord

bids us to beware of offending little ones: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones;" this may mean either little children literally, or children in simplicity and meekness, children in the faith, persons to the world of no importance, the poor, the lowly, the undefended. Take heed that ye despise them not; for little as you may think them, and unprotected, still they have their means of defence and help, they have their protectors and guardians, "their Angels do alway behold the Face of My Father Which is in Heaven."

And as it is thus exercised in private, so also the disposition of Angels must be thought of in public; I mean, in those times when Christians meet as a body, and recognise their membership in the unity of the Church, in public worship. It is a truth which very few of us seem to feel and realize, and yet a truth which Holy Scripture asserts—that the Angels are present, and take part in the public worship offered by man to God. It is said by S. Paul, when he is giving his rules for public worship, that the woman is not to pray uncovered; and the reason given is this, "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the Angels." She ought to wear upon her head the token of her being in subjection to her husband; she ought to have power on her head, the sign of power, of being under power, "because of the Angels;" for a proud, or an immodest, or an irreverent look, would not be seemly in the presence of the Angels who are pre-

sent at our worship, and behold them. And so the Church, as you know well, has ever joined, in her most solemn hymns of praise, the Angels and Archangels as fellow-worshippers with man. Though invisible, they join us in every song of praise; they rejoice to come among us, to pray with us, to worship and adore the King of kings with us; and, as they are far greater adepts in the voice of melody than we are, to help us, to elevate our hearts and voices, and to raise us up, by their example and sympathy, to the high tones of rejoicing which are fitting in the worship of our common God. Thus, as you well know, in the *Te Deum* we say, "To Thee all Angels cry aloud," "To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry;" and, in the most solemn time of the Eucharistic feast, we join ourselves in faith with the heavenly choir, and say, "Therefore, with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name."

So that everywhere we see this wonderful truth, and we practise it in its fulness. It is a clear and component part of our faith and of our worship, both privately and in public, in the grandest affairs of nations, and God's special governments of people—to the lowest and most defenceless member of the Body of Christ, as well as to the whole Body as One in Christ—to the distressed and persecuted, as well as to the joyous and prosperous—that, in poverty to shield; and in danger to succour, holy

Angels are appointed by the Almighty, in a wonderful order, and by the mediation of Jesus Christ, to minister invisibly among men.

What a multitude of thoughts this faith raises up into the mind! The unseen world! The world of spirits! That the air round about us, the fields, the streets, our rooms, are peopled with a heavenly host, which we can neither touch nor see! And yet it is only in accordance with the analogy of nature; for nature begins her work of God from the lowest, ascending in scales and degrees to the highest: from stones and minerals, mere matter which has no life, to vegetables which have an organic life—from vegetables to the half-organic, half-sentient life of the creatures of the sea—from that lowest kind of sentient life to full animal power—and from that, again, in a scale working upward to life, with degrees of instinct and seeming rational power, until we come to the life of man. But having come so far as man from the lowest, it seems but analogous to continue to something higher. So it is said, when David speaks of man, that God made him “a little lower than the Angels;” whereas S. Paul speaks of our Lord “being made so much better than the Angels,”—in which we see the scale, as it were, continued—man in himself and of his own nature in the scale above the brute creation, but below Angels; then Angels next, but Angels again lower in the scale when we come to Christ, Who joined the Divine Nature to the human,

and so brought it up above the Angels in His Own Person. The Angelic host stand then, in their rank of the creation according to analogy; and, moreover, it is said, even in them that there are orders—as the principalities and powers, the Cherubim and Seraphim, the Angels and the Archangels; and the expression, “wonderful order,” would seem to hint at this. Thus, then, it is. There is a part of the creation, and that by far the most wonderful part, the most numerous part, the most beautiful part, as yet utterly unseen by us—we know nothing of it, further than to make it, by God’s command, an article of faith—we know nothing by fact of Angelic ministrations, that they minister for us, or succour us, or defend us—we never see them—we never feel that they do so—we are never sensible of it by any proof of things done in consequence of it, and yet we believe it. And where can they be? Impalpable, invisible, presenting a nature to God which His universal Power creates, and a nature to themselves which they are permitted of God to recognize in each other, but to us nothing—filling up one more great order of this universe, so vast, so magnificent, to us as yet unknown, and never to be known may-be, unless we gain the crown of everlasting life, and are so admitted to the fulness of the vision of God’s Glory. What an inducement this is, merely this single idea of our being in an ascending scale of creation, as yet imperfect, to give us care in the prospect of the

future, so that we attain that which is perfect; what an inducement to know that there are principalities, and powers, and dominions of heavenly beings, whose glory we have not the least notion of, waiting to receive us in the many mansions promised of Christ; and thence being made known to us, by the imparting of new senses to our present imperfect natures, to carry us on into the Presence of our God. How can we rest content in this present scene of misery and sin? How is it that we do not, out of mere ambition, desire to go forward in our being, and be higher in the scale than we are? How is it that we rest content to mix in the paltry struggles of this petty world, to take part in its silly shows and vanities, to be absorbed in its transitory fashions, forgetting thereby that we are losing the opportunity of becoming hereafter as the Angels of God in Heaven?

This is one thought. Another is this: That as the Angels are set before us in their purity in Heaven, so our affections and desires will be purified as theirs are. It is expressly said by our Lord, when the Sadducees asked Him concerning the marriage of a woman who had seven husbands, "Whose wife shall she be of them in the resurrection, for the seven had her to wife?" "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God; for when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels in Heaven." In this passage there is set before us a direct compari-

son between the temporal state of those living on earth in the body, and those living in the spiritual state out of the body—the latter to be as the Angels. In what respect? The relationships which we bear here will not be recognised, or measured, in the same way. All that we have here is more or less carnal, and therefore sinful. Our best affections are impure and sullied by some evil. Not only the absolutely carnal passions, which, of course, are foul in the Sight of God, but even our best affections—such an affection, for instance, as that which has received the blessing of Almighty God, and been made a sacramental bond in so high a mystery, as to be a type of the union between Christ and His Church. Even this is below and distinct from the Angelic nature. The Angels' love for each other, their ardor and affection, their friendship, their works of benevolence, their relationship, (so to speak in human imperfection,) is of a far more exalted and purified state—etherial, spiritual, without any of the dross which clings to our affections on earth, even though they be the very highest and best.

Here then, we have again, a stimulant to hope, a restraint upon impatience, an exaltation of the mind to higher things, in the contemplation of higher joys. Whatever we may perceive here of goodness in our love, charity, benevolence, affections of husbands and wives, parents and children—whatsoever all this be, it is nothing to that which is in store for

us, when we shall be "as the Angels which are in Heaven." Let us rather dwell, then, on the spiritual, which shall be ours hereafter, than rest content with the sullied love, even as at the best it is, on earth, which here God suffers. S. Paul might have had some slight glimpse of it in his revelation, when he was caught up into the third Heaven, and heard unspeakable words; but even that was very slight, and beyond the power of being communicated to man. He was out of himself, as man, when it happened, and, therefore, he could say nothing. My brethren, ye that are broken-hearted in the loss of some temporal love, thwarted and crossed in the affections of your heart, and not able to fulfil for them those fruitions which you would desire, cease to lament, cease to weep—God wills it not for you here, but ere long there will be something better. Why care you for this misery? Why should you? It is the loss of a mere temporal love. It is nothing, absolutely nothing, in comparison with that which shall one day be yours amid the Angelic host. Love wrongly here, and you will miss the Angels' love for ever—suffer loss of love on earth, and the Angels' love will be yours in Heaven.

Another thought is this: If it be true that round about us, both in our solitary path of forest wilds and mountains, and in the crowding bustle of the tumultuous city—both on the perilous waters of the mighty ocean far abroad, and the smooth and gentle scenes of our quiet homes; and if, moreover, not

one, but troops, multitudes, whom we cannot count, stand by and with us, speaking, though we do not hear, and joining with us, though we do not see; yet if it be true, and is with us, as it ought to be, an article of our faith, then, in addition to all the other arguments which may be brought, how very great an argument this is, for a discreet, and reverential demeanor in our bodies, a pure and holy spirit in our minds. Would you, by an unchaste and foul action of the body, or by bitter and unseemly words of the tongue, or by violent and intemperate hastiness of spirit, chase away that holy and pure spirit, the messenger of God, sent from above to guard you? The spirit of the Angels is essentially holy; next to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, most holy. Your guardian Angel cannot stand by and behold anything unholy; he cannot stop you, if you will indulge in unchaste thoughts, but must fly; he cannot stop you, if you perform actions degrading to your nature, and lower yourself to the character of a brute, (for it is not an irrational brute that he is sent to guard, but a rational and responsible spirit—man,) he must then fly; and you lose him for your comfort and your help, when in times of distress you will need him.

This thought ought to furnish a restraint (if higher thoughts about God will not) in the wanderings of men from God's law: "Your Angel beholds the Face of your Father which is in Hea-

ven,"—but, at the same time, your Angel beholds your own face also, witnesses your actions, reports in God's Book the things which you say and do; and, if he is not allowed to be your guardian Angel, as he desires to be, he becomes your recording Angel, bearing witness against you in the day of Judgment.

And further, this faith, as it is an argument against unholiness, so it suggests thoughts against fear or alarm. We are continually placed, by the circumstances of life, in situations of immediate peril—some men, by their modes of life, more than others: "those who go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters," more so, perhaps, than any, but all more or less. The fire which burns down our dwelling, the flood which washes away our fields and pastures, the animals whom we strive to rule and discipline for our use, become ungovernable in their fury. These, and a thousand cases of danger, are liable to come upon us all. Now the remembrance, at such times, of our Angel, that there is from God a minister of His, close attending round us, ready to help, ready to extricate, will furnish us immediately with confidence and composure.

That which is generally called "presence of mind," we should rather impute, in a religious man, to some feeling of this sort. He knows that he is not alone, that he is attended by a spiritual being, though invisible, yet known by faith to be close at hand. This

thought nerves his arm, braces up his strength, and enables him to execute, with precision, the things which are required for his safety; while other men, who have no such belief, become bewildered and lost, know not how to act; and, being incapable of the exertion that is demanded of them, consequently perish. Such, perhaps, was (no doubt it was) the case with S. Paul in his shipwreck. The seamen gave themselves up for lost: "All hope that we should be saved," says S. Luke, "was taken away." The pilot, the mariners, all on board, two hundred threescore and sixteen souls, were about to perish; they gave up all thoughts of acting, and resigned themselves to death. Then who became the leader and captain of the crew? Who directed the means of action, with calmness, foresight, and presence of mind? The religious man, the Christian. He who knew, in faith, that God's Angel stood by—as he said to them: "There stood by me this night the Angel of God, Whose I am, and Whom I serve," saying, "Fear not, Paul." On this we find him not only of good cheer himself, but exhorting the rest to be of good cheer; not only fearless and confident himself, but imparting to them a fearlessness and confidence of action, by which, under God's Blessing, every soul in the ship was saved.

And still, once more, this faith is an argument for great reverence, and, at the same time, hearty zeal in the performance of the various duties of Divine worship. We have been too much in the

habit of estimating the value of the Divine offices of the Church by the numbers of a congregation. It is no doubt a very pleasing sight to behold, in the Houses of our God, vast multitudes gathered together for His praise; but the fact of a very few being collected together, of a thin, and what is called an unattended Church, ought not to damp our spirits, or cast a gloom about us, still less ought it to be made a criterion of the value of the service performed to God; for this reason—first of all, that our Lord Himself has promised, that where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there is He in the midst of them; and secondly, because we are assured that the Holy Angels are always present to thicken the numbers, and fill up the places which negligent and careless men leave vacant. Look not then, at the numbers of a congregation, but consider that if the few that do meet are but holy and sincere, those few are made countless multitudes in reality, by the presence of “God’s Hosts.” And so let not your prayers or your praises lose their energy, because you see not many with you. Rather be like Elisha, who said, there were “more for him than against him,” seeing the holy Angels, through faith.

The excess of value, in God’s Sight, of a large congregation of promiscuous men over a few, may be very much doubted. I adhere with much more assurance to the thought, that the few holy are better than the many, that come with mixed feelings

and uncertain motives. I should much rather say, that the congregation of a few, such as now have met together on this festival day of the Church, so disregarded by the crowd, is of greater price in God's Sight than the congregation of the multitude, who come, some for form, some for custom, some for curiosity; provided always, as I hope now it is with you, my brethren, that you remember that Angels are adding to your worship, that Angels join you in your praise, and that Angels are ever ready to carry both your prayers and your praises, as tokens of your faith, before the Throne of God, and Jesus Christ His Son. Let this thought ever keep you alive and watchful in your devotions; let it check wandering thoughts; let it sustain weak and failing aspirations. Are you inclined to turn away from the object before you? Are your prayers flagging? Do you imagine all that is going on cheerless and cold? Think of this—that the Holy Angels are by your side. They do not flag. They do not sleep. They are ever wakeful in their song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." As yet you are the grass of the earth growing up, not ripe; but the harvest is approaching—you are getting ready for the sickle; it is coming, and it will come quickly. Let this thought awaken you: "The reapers are the Angels." Pray, therefore, while you can, worship while you may, adore God while it is given you. Let not your worship be

that for which the third Angel in the great harvest will have to speak with a loud voice thus: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark on his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured without mixture, into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy Angels, and in the Presence of the Lamb;" but rather let it be thus: "Here is the patience of the Saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

SERMON XIX.

THE CONTESTS OF SCHISM.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, ON
THE APPOINTMENT OF BISHOPS OF THE ROMAN COMMUNION IN ENGLAND.)

1 S. PETER iii. 8.

*“ Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another,
love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.”*

WHEN it pleased Almighty God, of His Infinite Mercy, to commence the plan of man's redemption, He called one single individual, that through and from him His Revelation might be known to all. He did not plant His revealed Word in several different places, or in several different families; but He chose one;—in Abraham shall Thy seed be called. From this one man came the one family, and from the one family came the one Jewish Church; and into that one Jewish Church it was necessary, for all who embraced the faith of One True God, as opposed to heathenism, to enter by the covenant of Circumcision. In this great fact was the first signification of God's will to man—of Unity. In the Jewish covenant so commenced, as it came to be more and

more explained and developed, the same great principle was manifested, for there was only one Temple, only one Altar of sacrifice, only one High Priest, as there was indeed only One King, and He Himself only ONE God.

In the Prophets there is the same truth continually shadowed forth. We find it in Daniel's prophecy of the four kingdoms passing into the fifth, which was to swallow up all the rest, and make them One. In the image of a city, continually found in David: "Behold I lay in Sion, for a foundation, a stone—a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation;" and the building is described as with a head-stone, or corner-stone—One—Which is Christ Jesus, the Lord; and this is drawn out further in the vision of Daniel, the Stone growing up into a great mountain, one great uniform whole, one all-comprehensive and all-combining system, one increasing never-ending polity or kingdom or empire, which is to pervade, as God's Representative, the whole world.

When afterwards, in a more advanced stage of the same merciful plan for man's redemption, it pleased God to send into the world His Only Begotten Son, still the same spirit of unity was maintained, even as the first dispensation was only the shadow and figure of the second. The circle, indeed, was to be more extended, but the centre was still to be one. The family was to be larger, embracing all nations and kindred of the earth who would accept the gracious invitation;

but still the family, however large, was to be one:—Gentiles and Jews, the European and the Asiatic, the learned Greek, and the savage inhabitant of the Isles, were all to be made of God's family; but still the family was to be one, and learning of Him the same things, and hearing of Him the same doctrines, however widely apart their individual minds might be, they were to put aside all differences, as men by nature, and become "of one mind," as Christians.

Thus, you will find, all through the course of Christ's teaching, a continued reference to this principle. First, the great and emphatic annunciation made to S. Peter, taking up the very idea of Daniel and of David as to the stone. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church." One Faith, One Rock, One Church; neither two foundations nor two superstructures, nor two faiths, but ONE. The selection of one Apostle, and the saying, "upon this rock," is very remarkable in signifying the Unity of the Church; for though there were twelve Apostles, there was only one Rock. Just so in the parables—He describes the Church under the notion of a fold, with one porter, and one door, and one shepherd. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My Voice, and there shall be one fold, and One Shepherd." Again, under the notion of a mustard-seed; which, growing up ever so large, insomuch that the birds of the air lodge under its branches, still has but one small seed from which

it springs. Under the notion of a vine, Jesus Himself being that Vine, and the branches, however widely spreading, still holding their vitality, on the principle of a junction and unity with the trunk. Under the notion of a tree with grafts, as the Jews the original stock, and the Gentiles grafted in upon the stock, still making one tree. More directly in the prayers and compassionate expressions of our Lord, which we find in S. John's Gospel, poured forth in behalf of His disciples, as though this uniformity of all men with each other, and this oneness of mind, this identity of love, and of faith, and of works, was the great staple principle of Christianity. "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep, through Thine Own Name, those Whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be ONE, as WE are."

And it is all followed up in the same spirit of teaching by the Apostles, after our Lord's departure, just as it was by Himself during His Life. Even as He had taught them, and had joined them together in one Church—so did they go forth among the Gentiles, and preach the like. As S. Paul, (1 Cor. xii. 13), "By One Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into One Spirit." And again (Gal. iii. 28), "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." And in a still

stronger passage to the Ephesians, iv. 4, "There is one body, and One Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, One God and Father of all, and through all, and in you all." And the Fathers, I need not tell you, are full of this principle. It was the very life of the early Church—it was her very being. Unity broken, they ceased to be. Denied entering in, they considered themselves out of the favor of God at once. "Not to hold unity," says S. Cyprian, "is not to hold faith; when a man struggles against the Church, and resists it, does he suppose that he continues to belong to it? Episcopal authority is founded on one principle; and the tenure of this authority, however distributed, is associated with a recognition of its indivisible principle. The Church is one, though multiplied far and wide by its naturally prolific tendency; in like manner as the sun has rays many, yet one light; and the trees many boughs, yet their strength, from the root upwards, is a single property. Divide the ray from the sun, and the principle of unity will negative the separation. Lop the bough from the tree, it will want strength to blossom. Cut the stream from the fountain, the remnant will be dried up."

This is but one specimen, among thousands, of the tone and spirit of the early Church; its firm persuasion of the vital necessity to salvation of unity; and this not only in form, but in spirit. Not a

body which is lifeless and meaningless, but one which has a spirit, and that spirit one: not a body which has passive organization, or a junction of parts merely in theory, but an active, breathing energy of the same mind: not a hand thrust out on this side with one meaning, and a hand thrust out on the other with another meaning, and yet calling itself one body; but all the limbs sympathizing, and working with the same energy to the same end.

So, then, schism from the one body was equivalent to deadness. Heresy, or holding a mind different from the *one* mind, was equivalent to a loss of faith. But there were schisms in the Apostolic Churches; very grievous schisms; for instance, in those of Galatia and Corinth.

S. Peter speaks of false prophets, who brought in damnable heresies. S. John speaks of the forerunner of Antichrist. S. Jude speaks of men who "separate themselves, sensual, having not one spirit." And S. Paul speaks of them, "I hear there be divisions among you."

And the language in which they speak of these schisms and schismatics is truly awful. How utterly contradictory to the latitudinarian lukewarm spirit of the present age! He who rends himself asunder from the unity of mind taught by the Gospel, rends the garment of our Blessed Lord, which was seamless: he that says he disagrees with the form of sound words, containing the deposit of our faith, rends a limb off the body, and so mutilates it—

tears a branch off the vine, and so diminishes its fruits—breaks into the fold by “some other way,” and not “by the door,” and so becomes a “thief and a robber.”

But I need not go on. This principle is so very clear, that he who runs may read it. But what of ourselves? How must our Blessed Lord, sitting at the Right Hand of God, be grieved when He beholds His kingdom, His intended one great empire, such as it is now? How must it pain and vex Him (speaking in our imperfection) to compare it, as it is, with that which He would have it be, that which He taught it to be, prayed for it to be, died for it to be; for, alas! there are now as many “baptisms,” and “faiths,” and “hopes of our calling,” as there are nations and people; and as many altars reared up against altars, and minds set up against minds, and wills set up against wills, as there are almost men to possess those minds and wills.

We all call ourselves Christians, and yet we know not, when we meet each other in the street, whether we may not differ on some vital point of doctrine; and whether we may not, though conversing together with unanimity on the subjects of the world, yet be found unable to speak to one another on that which should form the great subject of our hearts' love—Salvation—lest we should be found to differ. In the very same family our Creeds differ; we know not sometimes how we shall be met if we

speak of doctrine even in the same household. We treasure up little individualities of faith, which are, in fact, little heresies, and will not have them gain-said; we form our own contracted views of Christ's one great Catholic Truth, and adapt it to our own little ways, judging of it by our education, circumstances, tone of mind, and society, and there we content ourselves, until we become so bigotted and enslaved in it, that it becomes a kind of heresy, of which we are not aware. We do not seem able, in this little contracted mind, to look out into the great One Mind of Christ. We judge it right or wrong by the standard of our own opinions, and adhere pertinaciously to the wrong, seeing it not, because it is our own. The One Mind of the One Body is shivered into a thousand fragments, and no man trusts his brother. Fearful, indeed, must be the aspect of the Churches now, as they stand before God; it is even as those described in the book of the Revelation, when God comes to demand of them their works. With some of us it is as it was with Ephesus, having "left their first love;" some with Pergamos, "full of those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes;" some with Thyatira, "suffering the woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce Christ's servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols;" and some with the Laodiceans, "lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, saying they are rich and increased with goods, and

have need of nothing, and knowing not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

But, my brethren, since this is the case, since, as a Church, in points of doctrine, in faith, in baptism, in hopes of our calling, it seems almost useless to say a word, so inveterate and deep-rooted appear the differences which divide us; since we have nothing to do herein, but confess and lament over our grievous dereliction of Christian unity, and to pray for the Holy Spirit to work out that which human efforts and human thoughts in themselves are quite incapable of attempting or imagining; since this is the sad truth, it is indeed some comfort to us that there is any second sense of the Apostle's words; and though we cannot speak of oneness of mind in faith, we can speak of oneness of mind in something else. If we cannot be one in faith, (and the devil, who is our great enemy in this matter, sowing his tares among the wheat, and going his way, will not leave the minds of men alone, so that they may receive the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and become one in the Church,) we may have somewhat to rejoice that there is a way in which Christians, however disunited, may yet have one mind in their moral practice. And thus the Apostle seems to speak in the epistle of the day: "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing;

knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." In this, the case is evidently supported by some breach of Christian unity, and the way to treat it, of some evil having been done, of some "railing" having taken place, of divisions, dissensions, and animosities; yet still saith the Apostle, "Be ye all of one mind," at any rate in this matter. "Have compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." Tolerate each other's differences with gentleness; add not to the evil of disunion in opinion, the evil of disunion in moral affection, but quench the spirit of schism, which Satan has brought into the world with such glory to himself, by, at least, this counterbalancing good—Have peace with each other, have brotherly kindness, do not return railing for railing, but "be courteous."

You will readily see, brethren, why I have thought it good to set before you this subject to-day. You have lately heard of what is commonly described by the name of "the Papal Aggression;" that is to say, the appointment, on the part of the head of the Roman Catholic Church abroad, of Bishops, to preside over their communion in this country. I am not going, at present, to enter into the ecclesiastical part of this question, for it would not be suitable, nor am I about to enter upon any consideration of its merits, as to the motives of those who have brought it about, but only as regards ourselves in a moral point of view,

how we ought to receive such a movement on their part; how treat it, how bear with it.

Persecution and violence on the ground of religion, has long ceased to be a sin in the conduct of Christians towards each other, and specially in this country. For twenty-five years, or more, the great cry has been, *Religious toleration*; by which, as a people, we have signified our sense of the wrongs of which, in our previous history, we have been guilty. The stake and the faggot, the prison and the axe, have given way before the universal national desire, to permit the word of God to have its free and unfettered action in the hearts of men. The repeal of the Test Act on one side, the repeal of the Roman Catholic disabilities on the other, the admission of the deniers of the Blessed Trinity into places of honor and trust, and of Jews into the municipal government of towns, shows clearly enough how the tide has been setting for the last half century. It has been the teaching of the state by Act of Parliament, that every sect might have its own teachers and its own government, every communion its own creed, every heresy its own opinion. This has been the principle of governments, and the feeling of the nation. It is generally known by the name of Latitudinarianism.

Now latitudinarianism ought to be consistent. It ought, at least, to follow its own teaching; I would not say whether it is right, or whether it is wrong teaching, but this only, that it ought to follow

itself in its own path. There has been a national principle studiously developed towards a certain end. The principle has been called by the name of *charity* by those who advocate it on the score of religion; *political rights*, by those who advocate it on the score of policy. In regard to the particular communion now under consideration, this national principle has been very remarkable; for while the Established Church has been ground down under the load of various encumbrances of the state, fettered in its action, deprived of its own legislative faculties, and forced to submit to the imposition of unfit pastors and bishops, at the dictation of a government which has no sympathy with its ecclesiastical system, simultaneously, every overture has been made to the Church not established, for its advancement and encouragement; freedom fully permitted for ecclesiastical improvements, no hindrances in its worship or its discipline, attempts made for a renewal of diplomatic intercourse with its head, the education of its people in Ireland freely and entirely conceded in its own creed; in short—favor, patronage, and good-will in every quarter. What, then, has happened, to render a change in this generous and Christian course of national toleration, all at once the mark and pledge of the very men who all their lives have made it the spirit and essence of their political and religious creed. How can it have come to pass, that we have launched out again in a career of bigotry and in-

tolerance, which reminds us of the dark ages of mediæval history, rather than the enlightened era of the nineteenth century? that in the midst of all our noble institutions for the protection of freedom in the things of the mind, and liberty of conscience in the things of God, we have suddenly plunged back again into the intolerant darkness of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth? My brethren, I know full well to what I shall be exposed at this peculiar crisis. I know what it is to dare to counteract popular excitements, and to venture to go against the stream of popular prejudice. I know what it is to be of a different opinion from those who are friends, and those who are dear to me, in the things of the Church. I know, moreover, what it is to plunge into religious controversy; its burnings of heart, its bitterness, and its separations; but all this, and its consequences, ought to be cheerfully borne for that Blessed Master's sake, Who came to teach love to the children of men, not hatred; gentleness, not acrimony; calmness, not excitement.

One of our main duties as His servant "Who did not strive nor cry in the streets," would surely be this—to allay and appease popular wrath, not excite it; to undeceive popular misunderstanding, not to foment it; to point out the danger of excited feelings on religious subjects, and the mischiefs to which they would probably lead, not to fall in with them, and stir them up by an additional clamor of our own from pulpit and press, and a cry about

ourselves, as unworthy as it is indefensible. For what, brethren, is our special office as ministers of Christ? It is the embassy of peace. We are to tell you, in the words of the Apostle, "Not to render railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing;" and especially we are to tell you, both in your conduct, your manners, and your language, to be courteous.

I am quite aware, looking on the subject from another side, that there is a duty appertaining to us, as servants of Christ—earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered unto the Saints. I am aware, also, of the stern necessity for the good of men's souls, that heretics and unsound members should be excommunicated, and cast out of the body of Christ. I am aware of the stringent rules by which the Church is bound to defend herself against the intrusion of wolves into the flock, who bring in the errors of Balaam, and speak with the voice of Antichrist. But, my brethren, have not all these very things befallen us in these latter times, and we, on our part, have been found as a Church utterly silent and inoperative in these acknowledged principles of discipline? Surely you must remember how there has been, in these latter times, a great heresy among us, and the Church quiescent; pastors judged unfit forced into the offices of the Church, and the Church submitting without any appliance of those rules of spiritual discipline which we now are so ready to recite. It would not appear any mark of our consistency now

to urge the necessity of defending the faith in a matter where no one article of the Creed of the Catholic Church is at stake, when in these vital matters, where the Catholic faith was at stake, and is now at this moment still compromised, we have been, and are still voiceless. It would seem as though we were ashamed of our apathy in the former instance, and now seek to vent ourselves in a proportionate increase of activity, so that we may wipe out the stain which has attached to us. And just as it so often happens in minor things, we are blustering and making a noise against a weak and defenceless opponent, to cover some sense of wrong in ourselves.

My brethren, take a slight review of the Church history of the past few years. Where is your consistency, if you allow, as you did, a bishop to be elected to an Episcopal throne, who was virtually under a sentence of heresy, solemnly adjudged by the university of Oxford, and against whom several of the bishops themselves so solemnly protested? Where is your consistency, if you allow the secular arm violently to intrude a priest condemned by the Church of heresy, into the pastoral office, against his bishop's jurisdiction, whereby an article of the Nicene Creed was denied by the rulers of this country? Where is your consistency, if you allow, as it is understood you very soon will (having partly decided it already), a Jew to take his seat as one of your national representatives, and then turn

round and say, our religious toleration must stop here—our latitudinarianism must have an end now, for we cannot suffer the Roman Catholic people to have their own Bishops. Are we to be thus apathetically heterodox within, when the salvation of our own souls is vitally concerned, and then to be so violently orthodox without, in a matter which solely concerns the spiritual state of the souls of others?

No, brethren, it is very clear that there are other motives and reasons at work in the instigators of the clamor about papal aggression and foreign bishops. It cannot be that we are thus violently stirred up, for the love of religion, or the anxiety we have of a sudden kindled within us for the spiritual welfare of our souls. There is a deeper policy at work than this. I beseech you not to be duped, or led away, but gently look to the real bearing of the case under the Apostolic rule: "Think not every man of his own things, but of the things of others;" and, above all, imitate not the language of vituperation, of which those who should have known better have set you the example; but at least in religious things be courteous.

In saying all this, I am not, as I said before, speaking of the ecclesiastical question. It is perhaps the most difficult question with which as a Church we have ever had to deal, and it must be viewed, as no doubt it is, a just judgment upon us in the increase of schism, which it will assuredly

create; and in the many heart-burnings which are already rising around us as its consequence, a just judgment for our apathy in real questions of the faith. There is now a rival episcopacy in this country, which there never was before. The two opposing communions of England and of Rome are brought by that means in a more close contact than ever they were before, and there can be no question but that the faith of Christ, our common Lord and Master, must suffer, not only in England, but everywhere. We were miserable enough before—we had our sects, and sects, and schism within schism, and heresy within heresy. But what are we now? It is not only the case now, that we have on the one side, Wesleyans, Independents, Anabaptists, Presbyterians, and many other sects whom we do not acknowledge in the light of Churches at all; but we have the whole of the great western Catholic Church brought prominently forth as contending within us for the Pastoral and Episcopal division of the whole of our country. We can hardly well conceive a sight more pitiable than this, a sight more abhorrent to the will of God, that will being so clearly manifested to be (as I have shown you) throughout the whole of Revelation—Unity, not only unity of form, but unity of mind. Somewhere there must be a very grave sin. Somewhere in Christianity there must be a fearful provoking of the Wrath of God, that not only sects and heretics should contend with

each other, and split off from the body; but that the one body itself, with the same organization coming down from the apostles, equal in doctrine complete; with the same creeds, and fundamentally the same rules of discipline, in fact, in this view, the very same Church;—I repeat, it is a grievous sin that this one body, instead of going forth to do the work of Christ against sin and the devil, should now be contending against itself, and destroying its own efficiency by internal contests; become the sport and mocking of the world which it was sent to conquer.

I do not say on which side the blame of this miserable state of things must lie; I only state that somewhere there must be a great sin, for which this is a punishment sent from God. But for our own portion of this schism, the question is, how are we to act? Are we to deal with it as now we are apparently about to deal with it, as if we were altogether spotless, pure, and certain to be right in everything we do, while on the contrary side, those who have made this movement, were full of the foulest and most malignant motives, and are doing all for the mere sake of injury to us? Should we not rather use this remarkable sign of God's Hand as a judgment notifying to us the backslidings of our Church and our people? May it not be that these things have come upon us in return for our many national sins, our contentions with each other, our jealousies, our petty warfares in sect against sect,

our unjust charges against each other, our suspicions, recriminations, our mean and unworthy dealings with the things of God, our national preference of mammon to Him, our abandonment of all the holy restraints and discipline of the Church, our declining to sacrifice self, and our willingness to sacrifice all that belongs to the Church for worldly honors and Erastian preferments, and lastly, and mainly, our gross and hypocritical tampering with the sacraments of our Blessed Lord's own institution, denying their doctrines, and falsifying their celebration by mock words, which, while we profess with outward lips, we deny in spirit and in life? Yes, my brethren, at whatever risk of suffering in being thus bold to run counter to the general stream of your opinions at this present crisis of excitement; still, thus bold I am constrained to be for Christ's Sake, and to tell you that this so-called "aggression" is but the natural fruit of our own conduct in neglecting God, and that, therefore, we had far better look to ourselves, and not to those who are so unhappily opposed to us. We have needed, for the sake of the people, and the due administration of the rites and government of the Church, notoriously, and by all acknowledged, an increase of the Episcopate; we have been talking of it for the last twenty years, and making pretences to carry it into effect, instead of which, with one exception, that of Manchester, we have passed the whole subject by in this mere talk; and therefore,

not supplying the flock with adequate superintendence and episcopal blessing of our own, how can we complain, if God has put it into the hearts of the rulers of the Church of Rome to do it for us. If we think that episcopal influence, and the ruling of the Church in the ancient ecclesiastical discipline, is of value, why did we not long before this supply our neglected poor with that which they so notoriously needed? But if we do not think that episcopal superintendence is of value; if we do not think that the Church has some peculiar grace and power attached to the office of a bishop, and the discipline and the power which flow from it; then wherefore this outcry? It is either an aggression, or it is not; if it be, then why did we not anticipate its necessity by the supply of bishops on our own part? if it be not, then why this clamor?

No, brethren, let me say it to you again and again, it is no question of religion, none whatever. The people who make this cry, and specially those who lead it, are not thinking of the good of men's souls. They use that word *religion* for a cloak. It is their own interests and their politics that they are caring for. Oh, be not deceived to join the ranks of the miserable and deluded crowd which will presently rise up under this excitement, and violate the Spirit of Christ. Do not mix yourselves with the pestilent movers of every evil passion of men, blowing the trumpet of religion to cover doing the most uncharitable act that this country

will ever witness. Keep aloof, I beseech you, from all subscribing of papers, and all meetings, and speeches of the movers of this odious conspiracy against the Church; believe me, when I tell you, that under the guise of Rome it is the Church, generally, as a Church, whose downfall these men are seeking. It is not Rome and her religion, as peculiar to her, that has made the "Aggression." It is the Church of Christ, and it is not against the liberties of England, that this "Aggression" is made, but it is against the tyranny of the world, and the wickedness of Mammon. Just as you were before, in the case of baptismal regeneration, asleep to its vital doctrine, and careless of its grace, and suddenly a heresy awoke you, when it was too late, and now you seem committed to it for ever by your own apathy, so you have been asleep for three centuries in the Erastian slumber of a State Establishment, and, suddenly awakening, find to your cost, that probably ere long great portions of the poor of your people will be won over to another division of the fold of Christ, because you persisted in not giving them pastors and bishops of their own.

Politicians will make this great event a cause of political agitation, because it will furnish them with a ready handle to work some occult mischief under the excitement of popular prejudice.

Puritans and State-Protestants will make it a convenient subject of outcry against that little

portion of the Church which ignores the State, and works solely for its Divine and Spiritual Head, Which is Christ Jesus our Lord.

Let us, brethren, make it an opportunity to cast ourselves in humiliation on the things that are past, lest in ourselves we be provokers of fresh schism, exciting each other, not to unjust and uncharitable hindrances of that promotion of the Faith of Christ, which of ourselves we either refuse, or are unable to supply, but rather to good works and mutual co-operation in the things of the common good. Above all, in this approaching time of danger let us give ourselves to prayer, that God may vouchsafe to pour into our hearts some spirit of the ancient discipline, some love of the ancient unity, some pouring of oil upon the troubled waters of our common faith; so that, if possible, even yet, just as sometimes in the very crisis of a fever, there begins to be a hope of life, so in the very crisis of this schism between the divided Church of Rome and of England, there may be a hope of the ultimate recurrence of universal Christendom to the one Fold of the One Shepherd, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous.

SERMON XX.

THE TOUCHING OF JESUS.

(PREACHED AT S. BARNABAS', ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY,
1850; BEING THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE DISTURBANCES AT
S. BARNABAS' CHURCH.)

S. MARK V. 30.

“And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that virtue had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, Who touched Me?”

PUBLICLY invited by a ruler of the synagogue, a chief man among the Jews, earnestly and publicly besought, even to the ruler falling down at His feet, Jesus arose and passed through the public way with an open intention to heal, or raise from the dead, the ruler's daughter. This assumption of miraculous power was not new; it was not the first miracle that our Lord had wrought. The people had been for some time accustomed to see this power claimed and exercised—therefore there was a crowd. It was no ordinary miracle that was to be done, nor for an ordinary man; and it was not to be done, as on other occasions, abruptly and at once, but there

was a passage from place to place. Hence, in proportion, a great concourse of people thronged the road, and our Lord could hardly pass. But there was a poor woman among the crowd, whose wants seemed greater even than those of the ruler of the synagogue. For twelve long years she had been afflicted with a sore disease; for twelve long years she had been spending all she had among the physicians, and was no better, but rather grew worse. The nature of the disease was such, that she could not, as others, seek openly for the help of our Blessed Lord; but she had a faith which would have otherwise caused her to kneel down, and, as others did, cry out, "Have mercy upon me, Thou Son of David!"

I do not know whether her faith was not even greater than others, certainly, it was not less. It might be called greater, when, saying nothing, she thought within herself, "If I might but touch the hem of His garment." She did touch the garment. In the crowd, while all around were thronging, she alone touched; but she touched in faith. "Virtue went out" of Him Whom she touched (i.e. miraculous power was exercised upon her); and she was made whole of her plague.

Theophylact describes this circumstance as a type or figure of sin. Her disease, according to the Jewish Law, made her impure. She was wretched, cast out, miserable. She applies to physicians, physicians represent the world; in her sorrow she

seeks comfort from the systems and societies of man; consults their wisdom, depends upon their ability to help and relieve her. She fails—and not only fails, but spends all that she has. Like the prodigal, she has nothing left. Sin goes on, will go on. Sin will depend upon human ability to cure its bitterness, or wash away its foulness, until it is absolutely exhausted and lost. Then, Sin touches the garment of Christ. This, Theophylact says, represents the Incarnation; it is the subject of touch. In the Incarnation lies the Atonement. Touching the garment, she displays her faith in Him Whom the garment held; touching the hem of the garment she displayed her humility, being silent she displayed her shame.

Thus, then, let sin be conscious of itself, let it be humble, let it have shame, and let it have faith, and then cure of sin stands ready by: “Go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”

But there is more to say than is contained thus generally. There are several particulars from which we may elicit wholesome lessons.

And first, we may observe upon the peculiar character of this woman's faith. It was secret, silent, embedded deep in her heart, but she said no word about it, never proclaimed it, but kept it within, brooding over it, until, though voiceless, it issued in an act.

It cannot be meant that it is wrong to proclaim our faith, far from it, confession of faith as well as

confession of sin, is imperatively demanded as a condition of our covenant with God; and because our Lord sometimes asks, "Believest thou that I can do this?" or the sinner sometimes exclaims, "I believe that Thou art the Christ;" it has passed on into a custom of the Church, in creeds and confessions, that every Christian should say, aloud and before the world, "I believe;" and S. Paul says, "With the heart men believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Nay, it is very remarkable, that in this very miracle before us, though the order is reversed, yet still confession of faith is demanded and made. In the peculiar disease of the woman, that our Lord might not bear too hard upon her, but have mercy, He wrought the miracle first, but then He required the confession afterwards. He, knowing all things, knew who had touched Him, but yet He said, "Who touched Me?" But wherefore this when He knew, and the miracle was done? Wherefore, but that she might proclaim before men the faith which she had before kept secret. "The woman, fearing and trembling," says S. Mark, "The woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth." Though "virtue had gone out of Him," sufficient to reward her before her confession, it does not seem that the miracle was perfected until after her confession. Though she was externally and

bodily healed, yet there was evidently something left; for it was not till after she had told Him all the truth that the final command went forth, "Go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

Thus, then, while our Saviour does not look but with compassion on the secret and retiring faith which would hide itself in the bosom of a sinner, still He requires, under every circumstance, an acknowledgment of that faith, before the full measure of His mercy is vouchsafed. Shame in sin, shame in confession, or shame in abiding by the acknowledgment of our faith, must give way, before the blessings of the Gospel can be fully or finally ours. And, yet, my brethren, there are many persons in daily life of a character not dissimilar to this woman. Many whose consciences by sin are accused, just so far as to make them utterly miserable, as this woman was—to spend all their substance in trying to cure it, as this woman did—to seek for all kinds of physicians, and yet grow worse, as this woman grew worse—and still withal, having a faith excited by the promises of the Gospel, and an anxiety to seek its cure, refraining, out of shame, or a mistaken delicacy, on a spurious refinement, to confess the evil, and proclaim the faith.

It must be remembered that there are public duties in religion, as well as private; public acts, for instance, in worship, public acts of praise and prayer, public acts of testimony towards man, and public acts of confession towards God. Exertion

in regard to these public acts, some degree of sacrifice in their performance, some degree of shame (should it be so) must be willingly incurred, as one portion of the duty which we owe to the service of God. It is a very common thing to find men of a learned, studious, or contemplative spirit—men whose minds are much given to abstract pursuits in philosophy or science, possessing, indeed, a faith in the doctrines of Revelation, not refusing the evidences of its truth, or doubting the necessity of its demands, still shrinking back from any public profession of it. Either there is in them an indolence of character, and they will not take the trouble; or there is a pride in their character, and they think themselves above the claims which are recognised by ordinary men; or there is a shame in their character, at the thought of being noticed or talked about, arising from their being much by themselves in solitary thought and silent abstract contemplation. Such men as these, comprising what is usually called in the world, “literary men,” are seldom found, as a class, whatever faith they have, in the House of Prayer, in public worship, or in the sacramental observances of the Church. They think they may touch Christ in secret, and receive all the benefits of His healing power, and retire within themselves and say nothing.

But this is not fair (if we may so speak) towards God; nor, indeed, is it true towards themselves—they must not keep their religion within them as a

private matter only; they must not pray in their closet only, or confine all the obligations of their faith to a contemplative or speculative adoration of God. They may, indeed, shrink from the appearance of ostentation, and shun, with a sensitive delicacy, the talk of the world. So far they are right; but they must also remember, that some little risk of these things must be incurred in the pursuit of duties as unquestionable as those which they pursue in secret—namely, the advancing of the kingdom of God by example, the guidance of the ignorant, and the strengthening of the weak.

A spurious sensitiveness, and a nervous temperament, must not be permitted to prevail over a public recognised duty. Our religion is one specially of propagation. It is not meant to contain a mere ideal faith, but one of practical expansion and increase. It is not a lamp given us to go and hide in our chamber, or under a bushel, or a bed, but a light to be handed from ourselves to others, and to be set in a candlestick, and to give light to those that are in the house: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Others, too, who live in "the world," whose occupations call them of necessity into the society of courts, and the high places of the great, or themselves, perhaps, as men call great, have a certain degree of timidity and shrinking in appearing to mix with the common people. Public worship

of necessity calls them forth. They must show themselves; they must do what others do, be brought down to the level of common men, say the words that other persons say, hear the words of exhortation and rebuke that other persons hear; be addressed as sinners guilty before God, as others are; in short, both in respect of their personal vanity, and in respect of their contact, be on an equal platform with the lowest. But any such public manifestation of what they are is irksome, and they will not abide it. Hence, in Churches, pews, closets, and curtains for the rich and great, that they may not be seen. Hence the sacred offices performed in their case with a difference, either privately at their own homes, or at some secret time in the House of God, when none are by. Thus it is, that although they are really in the crowd, really they are no more than others, but sinners with the rest, still they do not like to appear so. Their worship and their religious duties are achieved with an effort at privacy, because they are above, as they think, the common herd. They like not to be seen in the vulgar way that others are, and so they will not touch Christ; even in religion they would be exclusive.

Others, too, who live in the world, so live, not as in its greatness, but as in its sin. They are surrounded by evil companions, hear and know of the vices and excesses of the ungodly, are compelled to witness sights of wickedness, and hear words of

profaneness; and yet, perhaps, they have no pleasure in them. Their hearts may be, by God's secret Grace, working in them above the things in which they are compelled to mix. They may secretly loathe and abhor them; they may long to get free of them, and confess, before God and man, that they are themselves not as those around them. But they cannot; as pride keeps away some, so shame keeps away others—for pride and shame generally work the same results. They still mix with and are lost in the crowd, and they dare not come forth and touch Christ.

Others too, who, whether they live in the world or out of the world, may not only witness sin, but practise it. Their lives have been for years eaten up and destroyed by it. They have no resting place for conscience, by reason of it—they can find no peace—they have no comfort, for they feel its weight too heavy for them to bear. And still they remain there in the crowd. Jesus passes by. His miraculous power is known to them. That He works cures just suited to their case, they are aware—that He is willing to do so, they are aware; and yet there they remain in the crowd. What keeps them there? Shame. They dare not come out and say what is the matter with them. They look hither and thither, seek remedies in every place but the right one; continue hiding themselves in the multitude with whom they associate, and in the general delinquency which equals their own; and though

Jesus is there, still they touch Him not, neither confess their grief. Whence does this arise? It arises, in the main, from a want of the duty of self-examination. Men are reluctant to look into themselves, they are unwilling to rip open the wounds of past years, they would rather suffer a scar to grow over them, so that they might be hidden, and nothing said. They would be willing enough to come into Church and join in general expressions about sin;—"We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts;" but they are unwilling to say in what they have so followed them. They would not refuse to say, "We have offended against Thy holy laws," but refuse to ask their own hearts, much more to confess, why they have offended, or when they have offended. Sinfulness generally they confess—the actual sin they hide. To be classed in the general category of human frailty, as partakers from Adam of a sinful nature, they do not mind; but to say, "At such a day, or such an hour, with such a person, and under such circumstances, I fell into such a sin," they cannot bring themselves to say. This arises, I believe, not from any purposed desire to hide, but from an ignorance or want of habit in the practice of looking inward, and examining self. If a man is constantly in the habit, daily in the habit, as he ought to be, of revising the acts of the past day, sifting the motives of what he has done, and registering against himself the reasons of all he does, says, and thinks, then he has no

occasion to shrink from laying bare his heart. Practice tells him how to do it. To be quit of the burden of sin is his object, not to stand well with himself—to be washed and justified in the Blood of the Son of God is his desire, not to pass along the society of men and be well spoken of. And so he tells all the truth—lays open his “secret sins,” lest they vitiate his character; and denounces his “presumptuous sins, lest they get dominion over him.” What he desires to be, is “innocent of the great offence.” But to be innocent of the great offence, he must be watchful over every little offence. He must not spare himself; he must not smooth over what he does, and give it a gloss; but he must strip it, lay it open, expose it—“tell the whole truth.” Then touching the hem of Christ’s garment, in his faith he will be received and comforted. His wounds will be closed up, and mollified with ointment; accusing himself and his own faults, he will be excused of God; condemning himself now, and proclaiming that he is condemned, he will not be condemned in that fearful judgment. Even now, and much more then, will he hear the gracious words of absolution in return for his confession, and forgiveness in return for his penitence; and the words of the Blessed Son of God shall not be in vain: “Go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”

But there is another thought which may be suggested by this miracle, and that to us all, as useful as the preceding. It is this: The possibility of

being with Christ, in His neighbourhood, in His company, among His blessings, even touching Him externally, and yet not touching Him in faith. The woman with the issue of blood did touch Christ in faith. Although she was deficient in the confession, and wrong in the hiding of her secret, still she had a faith; which faith, cultivated by the Mercy of our Lord, and wrought up to the desired confession, did eventually save her. But let us remember that this woman was only one among a crowd. It is described that a crowd was "thronging" round our Lord. Many must, therefore, have touched Christ. It could not have been only this woman. So much was this the case, that our Lord, "perceiving that virtue had gone out of Him" (that is, that a miraculous healing of the woman had taken place), He, although knowing who it was, because He knew the hearts of men, exclaimed, "Who touched Me?" And when He did so, the remark of one of the Apostles was, "Thou seest the multitude thronging Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?" which evidently inferred, that a great many of the crowd must have touched the person of our Blessed Lord. But still the question was, "Who touched Me?" This shows, as I said, that many may touch Christ without faith, and so receive no benefit; or rather, as S. Augustine says, "many press, but one only touches." And so in regard to His mystical Body now, which is His Church, the crowd press, but few touch.

But to be more explicit. The Church is Christ's Body. All that belongs to the Church is His garment. The Church goes about, and would bring all men within her, and would teach all, and comfort all, and cure all of their sins. Now there is something which men see in this, and hear about; and a promiscuous crowd gather around, and they enter into her gates, and would fain ascertain what she means, and what she would do. Such a crowd as this here assembled to-day—a crowd in which there is a multitude of sinners of various kind and degree; some full of “presumptuous sin,” sinning as with a cart-rope; some whose sins go before them, leading them evidently to destruction; some whose sins are hidden and done in secret; some who refuse to crucify the affections and lusts of the flesh; some who are dead in their sins with a kind of apathy and heedlessness, hardly knowing that they do sin, and hardly caring when they know; some whose sins are of yesterday, and they fresh with the wound, and still struggling against it; some whose sins are of twelve years standing, with this poor woman; some who have sinned all their lives, and have grown gray in their sins, tottering on the verge of the grave, still without repentance. Such a crowd, brethren, it may be supposed there is now—here in Christ's Presence to-day; and they have come to see, with a wondering curiosity, what Christ will do; and they ask here, and they ask there, what these things mean? not so much caring for their inner sins,

which they would find (if they would but examine themselves) to be ready to cast them into hell, but caring, rather, for the tumult and the press that throngs the road. But, alas! brethren, how many out of this crowd, thus touching Christ, if they should do so by chance, touch Him in Faith?

Consider, first, There is prayer. Some have knelt down on their knees and said a prayer, but many have not. "My House," said our Lord, "shall be called a House of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." Men hold Prayer Books in their hands, and speak no word with their lips. They have touched Christ, but not in faith. Men speak words with their lips, and never mean them in their hearts—they have touched Christ, but not in faith. Men go through actions of worship in adoration of God, bow their heads, lift up their eyes, confess creeds, sing Psalms, and have not touched Christ in faith, nevertheless, if so be, that their heart's intention has not been there. So the crowd flocks round the Church, and throngs Christ with the press, and yet perhaps there is only one faithful woman, as in our Lord's miracle, who, after all, touches Him with the true spirit of prayer.

Again, this crowd hears the preaching of the Word. They enter the Lord's Sanctuary; they press, as it is said, into the kingdom of Heaven, and are violent, and take it by force; they must hear what is to be said; they are excited with what they hear; then follow arguments which they recognise

to be true, and are stirred up with feelings and emotions which the words of the preacher call forth; but out of the crowd which thus presses, how many, after all, touch Christ in faith? Alas! to how many it is a mere matter of curiosity; to how many it is a mere matter of dull routine; to how many it is the same sort of business to be encountered, and got through as best they may weekly, as the passing to their counting-house, or their farm, or their office, is daily. They press, but not touching in faith, the Word of God is profitless. That which is made by God sharp and cutting as a two-edged sword, is to them as a dull and blunted staff, without piercing. That which is meant by the Church as the vehicle of teaching, and the channel conveying to lost man a swift flight in haste from deeds of sin in repentance, and the awakening of their souls to deeds of holiness, is turned into a mere subject of a drawing-room conversation, or the intuition of a sententious unbelief.

A miserable thought this, my brethren, for the preacher of the Word. A miserable thought, as he looks upon the crowd that "come to hear," and contemplates the proportion of those who will "do." Here the Tempter comes in and says, "Why pursue this thankless task? you are sure that this crowd only presses on, and throngs for some accidental, if not some mere curious object, why care for them? Here they are, and ever will be listening to preaching, as the Prophet says, like the 'sound of him

who plays pleasantly upon a musical instrument.' They may be pleased for an instant, their imagination may be kindled, their ears may be gratified, but the heart, the faith, and the actions, of how many of them, think you, will touch Christ?" A sad thought, indeed, if we indulge it. But we will not listen to the Tempter one instant. Rather let us leave the consideration of the many who merely press around Christ, and dwell upon the one who touched the hem of His garment in faith. In that one is the hope of the preacher, the hope of the Church. In that one let us concentrate our view, as holding in the heart the deeds of future joy. Labor we must, and preach we must, to ninety-nine of the crowd, and know that it is vain, feel that it is vain, but in the hundredth we see the poor woman in the miracle of our text, and take courage and go on.

And yet once more, there is a crowd that press around the body of Christ in a still closer sense, a crowd to which there must needs be ever issued holy warnings, lest they tempt themselves to great danger in touching Him without knowing Him. "I Am the Bread of Life," saith our Lord. "I Am the Bread that came down from heaven. Whosoever eateth of this Bread shall live for ever. Whosoever eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life," S. John vi. To have eternal life, who does not desire? To come so close to Christ, as by Him to be sure of eternal salvation, whose mind is

so ignorant, and whose heart so hard as not to seek? Men, of course, do seek it. And therefore in the Holy Eucharist, in which alone they can "eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood," they seek it.

Now, the question for them is, How do they seek it? There is nothing at first sight so gratifying to the parish priest as to see great crowds pressing round the altar steps, anxious and searching for this Bread of Life. But, then, that sight is utterly marred and spoiled, and all its hallowed joy dissipated, when the thought comes across him, how many in this crowd are but pressing round the Sacred Body, not really touching Him in faith; how many have come with consciences but lightly examined, sins but slenderly confessed, and hearts but coldly moved, in the search of that which is to be to them, in the language of S. John, the Flesh and Blood, which, unless a man eat and drink, he cannot have eternal life.

Yes, even in the Holy Sacrament it may happen, that many motives may impel beside the right one. I will not say hypocrisy or pretence, because that would be too grievous a sin; but very frequently there may be carelessness, accommodation of self to a custom, or a wish of others, or a desire to go through a ceremonial observance, not considering the vital consequence that must attach to its desecration: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." Not considering this, there may be (I fear in some instances

there must be) those in the crowd who touch not Christ in faith.

I would not say this to deter, or to alarm, because we all know how many causes there are already, without a word from the pulpit, to hinder an approach to the altar; but it may be, that many who cannot bring themselves to an habitual communion in the Holy Feast, do so out of a reverential feeling; while some, who venture lightly and wantonly to press themselves into it, had better not be there. The Church sets a very solemn guard and warning against too promiscuous an approach. She fences round the steps of her most holy mystery, and tells her people what they must do, and what they must not do, if they would be communicants. But, alas! how few heed what she tells them; and not heeding, I fear must incur, if they approach with thoughtless steps, very serious danger. The approach to a mystery, and the indulgence in a holy duty, with irreverence or want of preparation, or thoughtlessness, must eventually harden the heart, quite as much as an habitual abstinence. I do not see any difference between the danger of that man, who, leading an unholy life, or guilty of any known sin, unrepented, ventures to press in a crowd around the Presence of Christ, and never touches Him in faith; and the danger of that man who, hearing of Him, and knowing of the blessings which are ready, takes not the trouble to draw near and taste, and see how gracious the Lord is. Both run the risk of being

hardened in heart, and quenching the Spirit—the one from presumption, the other from apathy; the one from divesting the things of God of their awfulness, the other from diminishing their importance.

And now, brethren, I would ask you to take seriously home to yourselves the observations you have heard. I would ask you to place yourselves, in idea, with the crowd around our Blessed Redeemer, recorded in the holy Gospel of this day, and to see how far you are like that poor woman—how far you are like the mere accidental, curious, but faithless multitude. I would ask you, if you are in sin, to get rid of pride, to get rid of shame, and to tell the whole truth without fear. Just as Christ was ready to hear the poor woman's sorrows, and to minister to her comfort and peace—so is the Church. She openly exhorts her members, in the Office of the Holy Communion, that if they find their consciences too heavily burdened for their own examination to satisfy, they should come to the priest and make confession to him, that they may receive the benefit of absolution, with ghostly counsel and advice.

I would here remind you, that this, however little heeded in general, is a true Catholic practice, and meant to be for the comfort of the penitent, as the words are used. Do not strive to hide yourself, or touch Christ in secret, or presume to pray, or to hear God's Word, and specially, and above all, presume not to touch Him in His Blessed Sacrament, unless you have fully satisfied every demand of self-

examination, and quiet in conscience, and assured in faith, can come to Him and touch Him, telling the whole truth.

I beseech you, come out of the crowd, if you have faith, and linger not among them any longer; touch Christ and He will hear you, as He heard the sick woman in the Holy Gospel. Press forward, but press in gentle unpresuming faith. She saw what the crowd saw not, and felt what the crowd felt not. So touching as she touched, you will receive the blessing with which she was blessed; you shall find in your body and in your spirit, that you are healed of a great plague; you shall hear the Words of Christ, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole."

SERMON XXI.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHARITY.

(PREACHED AT S. BARNABAS', ON THE TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY,
1850, BEING IN THE MIDST OF THE DISTURBANCES AT S. BARNABAS' CHURCH.)

1 COR. xiii. 8.

“Charity never faileth.”

OUR Lord has expressly told us, that when we pray for the forgiveness of our sins, one condition of the successful issue of such a prayer is the spirit of the mind which we bear within us towards the brethren—“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.” And S. John says, “If a man says he loves God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen.” And S. Paul tells us, amplifying every little portion of this great Christian principle, that the gift of tongues, the gift of prophecy, the gift of knowledge, faith,

almsgiving, martyrdom, all is valueless, all is nothing, all is but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, if there be not Charity; all else, he says, may fail—the eloquence of preaching may fail, giving our bodies to be burned may fail, the working of miracles may fail, the understanding of mysteries may fail, but Charity never faileth. Because, while other gifts stand by themselves, Charity is the bond of them all; without Charity they are not bound to God, they are not done for God's sake, they are not done in Him who is Himself Charity. "God is Love." Without Charity, therefore, they are not sanctified. It is the very bond of peace, and of all virtues. "If Charity were perfected," saith S. Chrysostom, "there would be neither slave nor free, neither ruler nor ruled, neither rich nor poor, neither small nor great; nor would any devil then ever have been known;—I say not Satan only, but whatever other such spirit there be; nay, rather, were there a hundred, or ten thousand such, they would have no power, while Charity existed. For sooner would grass endure the application of fire, than the Devil the flame of Charity. She is stronger than any wall, she is firmer than any adamant, or if thou canst name any material stronger than this, the firmness of charity transcends them all."*

The violation of Charity may be set before us in the common way in which the violation of any other virtue takes place—namely, in thought, word,

* Comment. in loco.

or deed. In the latter, namely, in deed, there have, of late, been very few examples. We have become, on principle, tolerant of each other's differences; in so far, at least, as to abstain from those grievous acts of persecution which distinguish the pages of the early historians. Once, indeed, to slay and to destroy was the mark of the true faith of the Church; and, strange to say, to destroy one's brother was the sign of our love of God. How fearfully did men, some even of the most exalted character and attainments, forget these words of S. John: "He that saith he loveth God, and at the same time hateth his brother, he is a liar;" *i. e.*, things which may be thought to be done for love of God, if, on examination, they are found to involve hatred of a brother, lose all value; and the very principle supposed to be operating as love of God, is a delusion. It is impossible to love God, and not love man—impossible to do man an injury, oppress him, tyrannize over him, take from him his rights, his liberty, or his life, and then turn round and say, I honor, respect, and love God. A man who speaks thus is nothing more or less than, in the language of S. John, "a liar." Therefore, all acts of religious excitement, all displays of zeal, all acts of persecution, when they are said to be, and, even by the perpetrators themselves, thought to be signs of the love they bear to God, are mere instances of a perversity of mind which cannot distinguish truth from falsehood. And yet

this has been even in Christianity the great argument for religious oppression in all ages. Take the times of Queen Elizabeth on one side, and Mary on the other. Take the dreadful history of the Huguenots, and the massacre on S. Bartholomew's Day; take the fearful accounts which we read in the annals of the Inquisition; take the history of our own Puritan wars, and the Covenanters of Scotland—what a miserable display there rises up before us of this distorted idea, that the glory of God demands religious persecution of those who differ from us in opinion! In all those cases the duty was positively urged upon man to destroy, and slay, and cut off from the land of the living every soul which presumed to have a version of the Christian faith opposed to the majority; and a curious reason was urged, that even death was necessary for the salvation of a heretic; and blood was required for the purgation of the Church from the stain of a (so thought) false faith. O, fearful delusion by which the men of those ages, as though embodied by the spirit of evil, were nationally and ecclesiastically surrounded! how utterly in contradiction of the very Being of God; how directly in the teeth of Apostolic teaching—zeal for God's glory—sorrow for men's error—pity for men's sins, which would work in us love, gentleness, compassion, a saving and retaining of them for repentance and ultimate return—not destruction of body or soul for ever. When the Boanerges wanted to call down

fire from heaven upon those who did not, as they thought, honor Christ, He replied: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

But deeds, in violation of Charity, would never exist if there were not the springs of such deeds in the mind. It is the mind, and its various emotions, that we must first examine, in order to detect the seed-plots from which arise the greater acts of fury and of violence which have devastated the nations of a religion of peace. And a fertile garden it is. Suspicion of motives, imputation of false grounds of action, imagination of things affecting others which exist only in our own minds, and for which we have no real ground: then there is jealousy, envy, fretfulness, peevishness, and a host of minor disturbances of the mind, which break the cord of love. This is meant when it is said, "Charity thinketh no evil." The success of others in doing good works of God kindles in us a desire of emulation, if we have the spirit of love—of jealousy, if we have the spirit of the devil. Others, rising high and prosperous above us, suggests rejoicing with them that do rejoice, if we have the spirit of love—of envy, if we have the spirit of the devil. The misery and casting down of our brother in some calamity or sin, suggests to us grief and sympathy, if we have the spirit of love—of triumph, if we have the spirit of the devil. Things done out of the usual order, or displays of

zeal, or teaching of faith, which seem extraordinary to ourselves, are clothed with the idea of our own inadequacy to comprehend them, if we have the spirit of love; but with the idea of some mischievous intention, or impurity of motive in others, if we have the spirit of the devil.

Let us take our own case, brethren—I mean the case of a pastor and his flock, a preacher and his congregation—a case such as ours is to-day; and S. Paul seems to lead us to it in the epistle: “If I speak with the tongue of men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” “If I speak,” *i.e.*, in the words of a sermon, be they words of admonition, words of warning, words of exhortation, words of reproof—if they be in suspicion, if they be in jealousy, if they be in personal fretfulness, or displeasure, against any one soul, those words, having left Charity behind, are valueless. The preacher may have indignation against sin, and hatred against the devil its author, but he must ever love; yes, ever love him that commits the sin, separating very carefully the thing from the man, and abhorring that which has drawn away; but loving, so as to reclaim him that is drawn away. His words must be words of personal sorrow, commiseration, and pity, otherwise they are sounding brass; his words must ever breathe the spirit of that Great Head and Teacher of us all, our very Saviour Himself, Who loved even the publican and

sinner, and sat with them at meat, and did not scorn the company, nay, received rather the worship (because she was a penitent) of Mary Magdalene. So then, if now there should be in the preacher's words, (in this extraordinary scene which is before us, this vast concourse of men, most of whom I never saw before, utter strangers, not of this flock) —if there should be on my part any anger, any wrath, any turbulence, or discomposure of mind, at what I see and fear—if I should degenerate into any unworthy suspicions of the motives which have led most of you hither to-day—if in any thing you may do or say against me, in your misunderstanding of the things you never have been taught, I should be moved to any other feeling than sorrow and regret—if, in the violent abuse and vituperation which is carried on against this Church and parish, I should be led to imagine any other cause than ignorance, (however developed ultimately, and serving ulterior ends, but still primarily ignorance,) then I myself should be the sounding brass, and the tinkling cymbal, of the Apostle; without Charity, nothing worth.

But brethren, as there are two sides in a reciprocal duty, and the preacher must have love, lest he be sounding brass, so the hearers must also have love, lest their hearts become like nether mill-stones, and the ministrations of the Word become to them curses instead of blessings. "Take heed how ye hear," saith our Blessed Lord; take

heed also, let us add, how ye speak of what ye hear—how ye interpret what ye hear—how ye think of what ye hear; for unless there be Charity to season what ye speak, what ye interpret, and what ye think, it were better that a mill-stone were tied about your neck, and ye be cast into the sea.

What is it that hinders Charity in religious opinions? What is it that makes parties, schisms, and sects? What is it that sends one great portion of a congregation into a Church to find fault, to censure, to criticise, or to ridicule? What is it that sends another great portion out of the Church, without any edification, vexed, dissatisfied, morose, and splenetic? What is it that ultimately drives them into little religious knots, here of Paul, here of Apollos, here of Cephas? It is Prejudice; which is the opposite of Charity. The one is of the devil, as the other is of God. Prejudice is narrow-minded, illiberal, selfish, locked up in a little close corner of its own, of short vision, of dull hearing, and destitute of feeling. Prejudice can only look one way—has only one book to read out of—has only one dress in which it clothes every thing it sees. Take Prejudice into that wide open field of God's creation—the starry sky, with myriads of the heavenly bodies shining around—it can only see one. Take Prejudice into the full swelling harmonies of the music of the spheres, with endless varieties of sound, melody, and harmony—it can only hear its own one solitary note. Take Prejudice into the

beautiful colors of the endless light with which God treasures the earth, the heavens, and the waters—it can only see one; and so reading, seeing, and hearing (it is no matter), there it remains, cold, hateful, solitary, unexpanded and inexpandible; while Charity, beaming all over with warmth and benevolence, expanding wide her beautiful arms of affection and devotion, sees all things that they are good, will not believe anything to be evil, trusts all that is done, hears all that is said, with patience, loves all that presents itself. “Charity never faileth.” Charity is Catholic—Prejudice, sectarian.

Charity says, If I see God worshipped in one way here, and in another way there, it does not follow that I, the worshipper here, should hate, speak evil of, and impute wrong motives to the worshipper there. Charity says, I see things that I never saw before—but it does not follow, for that reason, that they are wrong. Charity says, I see things which appear to my imperfect view and ill-prepared vision, erroneous—but, may be, they are right. Charity says, Things are demanded of me in a way which I never heard of, and I am told to do this, and abstain from that, and it is all an untrodden path to me, strange, unaccountable, and unpleasant; but it does not follow but that the fault may be in myself, not in the thing—in my own want of knowledge, not in the deficiency of the rightness of what is done.

And so Prejudice dismisses the words of the

preacher with a scowl of contempt, Charity with a smile of hope. Prejudice has a lowering brow, and a vision askant; and a countenance with the mark of Cain; Charity has a bold, a generous, and an open front, a vision such as doeth the heart good to look upon, and in which the very Angels take delight.

My brethren, in the present age of the Church, when every hearth is split by the contending controversies and dissensions of religion, the only chance that remains for us is to hoot out from its place (which it is so fond and so clear to assume in our hearts), to hoot out from it the great enemy of Charity, namely, Prejudice. If we have already predetermined in our minds that that only is right which is right to ourselves—if we have settled the matter beforehand, that unless every man we meet agrees with ourselves, every man we meet is wrong; if we say, no matter that the whole world else has decreed thus, *I* decree differently, and to that difference I will adhere—what can be done for the advance of that great blessing which our Lord ever so anxiously and so continually prayed for, UNITY? Yet such are the men, who, in Church-customs, Church-rites, manners of prayer, and praise, refuse to look to the Catholic Church, and will persevere in saying that the individual is to rule the mass, the particular to be superior to the general, the less to the greater, self better than all the world. And then it is quite in vain that

the pages of the Gospel are set open for the perusal of the multitude, in vain God's Word is sounded forth, in vain reason, argument, entreaty, explanation; for the heart is seared, the will obstinate, the understanding perverted, and Cephas, Apollos, and Paul prevail in their divisions over Christ and His Love.

Now, brethren, in your own case, your own particular case of assembling here in this House of God to-day, suppose you have come hither under some such prejudice as I have described; supposing you have considered the doctrines taught here, and the rites and ceremonies which you have heard to be used here, injurious to your own idea of true religion. The choral service, for instance, in which we sing the prayers, instead of reading them in the usual declamatory voice—or the form of the Church in which the ministers of Divine Service are separated from the people by the screen, as they are distinguished in dress by the surplice—or the ceremonies used in the celebration of the Holy Communion, in which high reverence is used towards all things appertaining thereto, for the greater dignity of the Blessed Sacrament,—suppose these things, being adverse to your own ideas of performing Divine Service, should offend you, have you well considered, before you suffered your minds to give way to this offence, whether there are justifiable grounds for it? Have you well considered

the questions arising out of these observances, the moral and religious philosophy of their bearing, the influence which they have in regulating the human mind, the tendency of their use to develop the deeper emotions of true religion and devotion, albeit, as we may grant, such religion and devotion may not be agreeable, personally, to yourselves? Moreover, I would desire to ask you whether you have made these difficult subjects any part of your duty; whether you have made yourselves masters of the rules of the ancient Church, her liturgies, her ceremonies, her method and time of prayer; whether, indeed, if that deeper reading may have been omitted, you have at least made yourselves masters of the history of your own particular national Church; whether you know its canons, its articles of faith, and its rules of discipline, bearing, as they must do, on all these questions? If not, then, brethren, in all honesty of dealing with each other, how can you safely come here to decry what we do, and find fault with what we practise, yourselves not knowing whether they be intrinsically right or wrong, but only judging, according to your own minds, of what you would personally like or would not like? And remember, you who come here to judge and to clamor, being no members of the flock, having no legitimate voice in what is done, but thrusting yourselves in uninvited, cannot have just cause to be offended by things which you

had only to escape by frequenting, as in duty you were bound, your own several parish Churches. Is it not so? Are these things, I would ask you, signs of charity, signs of the love of Christ?

Let me put before you one specific point which has, I believe, given more offence than any other of the ceremonial uses of the Church—the burning of lights upon the altar.* You observe now in these cries a practical illustration of what I was saying. I was explaining how Prejudice, in opposition to Charity, judged everything in its own way, and would not condescend to learn. You have exemplified it in making these outcries before you would suffer yourselves to be taught something of what I really believe you are altogether ignorant. I was about to ask you, when you interrupted me, whether you had studied the canons of the English Church upon this specific point, and whether you were aware that it is positively the law to use altar lights—that, in fact, those clergy who do use them are only doing so in obedience to the law, while those who neglect to do so are actually guilty of a violation of the law? I would have you, then,

* In the delivery of the sermon, immediately on the mention of these words, an uproar arose in the Church on the part of the intruding strangers, which for some time it was difficult to allay. Cries of “No Popery” and the like filled the Church, and the sermon was interrupted. After a while, peace was restored, the better portion of the congregation, consisting of the parishioners, subduing and putting to shame the intruders, most of whom had come from strange parishes. The course of the sermon will show that the whole of it was principally addressed to such like strangers and intruders.

brethren, merely refer to a book in common use, written by one who is by no means subject to any of the suspicions of party, one whose testimony therefore on this head is perfectly unbiassed, and must therefore be satisfactory to you—I mean Dr. Hook, the Vicar of Leeds. I would have you refer to his Church Dictionary, and there you will immediately find, under the head of “Altar Lights,” a full explanation of their use;* you will find that they are enjoined by the Church of England, their number, two, being opposed to the Roman communion, not identified with it, and their whole theory being especially significant of a great spiritual idea—that of our Blessed Lord in His double nature of God and Man, and that of His Gospel being the light of the world. You will find also that all the Protestant Churches have ever and do still use the lights as we do, or rather ought to do; and all through the Lutheran communion, even to this day, such lights are the common practice of their communities in celebrating the Divine office of the Holy Eucharist.

Now, brethren, can you justly make outcries of “No Popery” on this head? You might find a multitude of things far more bearing the color of resemblance to Rome than this; but you have fastened upon this point most happily for an illus-

* In the delivery of the sermon, the passage in question was recited aloud to the congregation. The reader may easily see it by reference, so as to obviate the necessity of repeating it here.

tration of Prejudice—founded, I am quite sure, upon mere want of knowledge; and it surely ought to teach you, and many others in whom ignorance is more inexcusable than in you, to pause a little in your hasty zeal; to allow a little more for the rectitude of principle, and the honesty of purpose of those whom you have come hither to-day to judge. If the law of the English Church is such as I have described it to you,* then common honesty would rather incline your exertions towards the abolishing of that law, than to the imputation of motive to an individual clergyman who obeys it. I would say, take your Prayer Book, its articles and its rubrics, and abolish them—take your canons and remodel them; but as long as you retain them, visit with kindness, or at least some degree of allowance, those who think it their duty faithfully and fully to abide by their spirit, and obey their letter. Brethren, you have done all this in ignorance—may God give you, in His good time, a better spirit, both of wisdom and of love.

Habits of worship, tones of devotion, manners of prayer, cannot be brought down to the level of every individual's pleasure. Would there have been, as now there unhappily are, Presbyterians, Inde-

* This has been subsequently confirmed by an elaborate opinion of Mr. Badeley, dated 12th February, 1851, in which he concludes thus :—"I am of opinion that the law, as it now exists, enjoins the use of these lights. Although, in consequence of its long discontinuance, a Bishop may possibly be unwilling to enforce it, he cannot prevent its restoration, if any clergyman chooses to restore it."

pendents, Anabaptists, Wesleyans, Catholics, Protestants, and the like, if Charity had been by, which "thinketh no evil, and hopeth all things"? Would there have been an excommunication of one Church by another, and a multitude of Christians here pronouncing anathema against a multitude of Christians there—the West against the East, and the East against the West—not for matters vital to the faith, but for mere opinions, mere words—if Charity had been by? So among ourselves here close at home. Would there be divisions within divisions—Rome against England, and England against Rome—had "Charity" been by? Or would there be, in the same congregation, a Pastor preaching one way, and people following another—a Bishop ruling that such a doctrine is true, an Archbishop determining that the contradicting of it is true—voices of contention in the flock, perpetual jars and discords—good works sought to be done, and more than half the people saying, I will have none of them—Churches to be built, and poor to educate, but hard hearts and close hands, because of the person who points out the way to do it—a Micaiah ever found, who is hated because he prophesies evil; and the person looked to, rather than the thing? My brethren, this would not happen, as now it does happen, in almost every congregation in this great metropolis, if Charity, which endureth all things, Charity, which is not easily provoked, suffereth long, and is kind, which never faileth, had

been in men's hearts, as a living principle of moral action or religious faith.

But here it is not unlikely that we shall be met by some such remark as this: "If we are to keep in our hearts this all-embracing Charity, so as to acquiesce quietly in what is done, never provoke dissension or discussion, but ever assume that what we see is right—then, is there not a great danger lest we degenerate into mere machines, suffering others to lead and shape our religion, without a thought of our own? Whereas, there are points which, S. Jude directs us, are not to be slightly passed over; but he says, "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." And in another place it is said, that we are always to "be ready to give an answer to them that ask us a reason of our faith."

Yes; there are two points involved in this remark. One, the right of private judgment; the other, the danger of a latitudinarian carelessness. The right of private judgment (in its true sense) no one in this country, and in our Church, would for an instant deny. The duty of searching God's Holy Word, meditating on those great things which it has pleased Him to reveal, and studying, each man for himself, His wonderful ways, no one would hesitate in allowing to be the duty of every Christian man. But you will observe, that it is not the duty which is spoken of or touched, but the result of the duty. It is not the personal study of Religion and

her precepts, but the *consequence* of that study, when it issues in controversy, dissension, jarring, and violence. Suppose there be, as in every Church there is, an authorized standard of faith, of discipline, and of practice; and the greater number, in the laxity of an evil generation, have abandoned the things which are set before them; and in the midst of this, suppose there be some few who desire to abide more honestly and faithfully than has of late been the custom by those standards of discipline and practice—are they for that reason to suffer indignity from the rest? If it be conceded, that every one has a right, on his own individual responsibility, to differ from the Church, and so differing, Charity says, Let him do as he will, he has a right to think for himself—would it not by the same law follow, that if a person on the other side assumes his right of private judgment to follow the Church, he ought to be permitted so to do, without offence or molestation? You assume your right, by the study which you have made of God's Word, and your individual interpretation, to deny the propriety of certain things; my charity suggests to me to concede it, and leave you at liberty. I, on the other hand, by my study of God's Word, and by my interpretation of it, have come to an opposite conclusion; will not your charity concede to me a like privilege of doing what my conscience dictates, without molestation? Now this is the very point—this is the touchstone of true Christian Charity.

But then, again, there is the opposite danger of latitudinarian carelessness, lest men say, Let every man believe what he likes, and do what he likes—let every man obey or disobey, receive or reject, hold this dogma or that, belong to a sect or to the Church, worship here or worship there—all this is of no consequence whatsoever; God will look upon us all alike.

It is evident that such language as this destroys the idea of a Church altogether; it sets aside creeds; makes every man the judge of his own conduct; lowers morality; and, in the end, must issue in ungodliness and infidelity. But can this be the meaning of the Charity which we advocate? Most assuredly not. Anxiety for each other's salvation, a desire to keep our brethren out of any danger, a determination to advance God's kingdom upon earth in the hearts of others, as well as to keep it safe within our own, is assuredly the part of every one who prays, by the command of his Lord, "Thy kingdom come." And let it be freely conceded that each one in his own sphere (so far from being like Gallio, one who cares for none of these things), ought to labour to impart to others the knowledge which he possesses himself—ought to strive to correct error, enlighten ignorance, and disabuse prejudice; still, that concession does not involve the conclusion, that he is to bring it about by undue means of violence, or outrageous clamor, or such as we have been witnessing of late. Let our zeal for the truth be only guarded by wisdom in its objects,

and be occupied in essential truths as its subjects—let it bring to bear upon its points gentleness and forbearance as its means—and then we shall have the spirit of toleration without the spirit of latitudinarianism, and a desire to propagate truth without the danger of prejudice. We shall keep clear of that wild laxity of faith which plunges the Church into heresy; but we shall concede to every Christian brother the right to pray, to worship, and to think, without hostility, and without collision.

And now, brethren, if these observations shall have had any weight with you, it will be God's Grace moving in your hearts. To Him be the praise!

What a sight this is! What sounds within of murmuring, and breaches threatening, of that which I have been putting before you as God's gift of love! And what tumultuous thronging at the doors without!* What fearful exclamations of man's wrath, in the midst of this holy place, which was meant to be the house of mercy and of peace! How shall we regulate ourselves now, and be regulated, and control our passions, so that we be kept from any great sin in this conflict of evil? How shall we be protected by the spirit of love, that we violate not the reverence due to God's Sanctuary? How shall we be saved from some grievous trans-

* The crowd outside the church was at this time battering the doors, and threatening to break in, the Police resisting, and much violent language on all sides pouring forth.

gression against each other in thought, or word, or deed?

I beseech, brethren, now while there is time, before you by any possibility may be led on, in the hastiness of anger, to use any violent expression against us, or indulge in any provocations, or burst forth into any of those party cries which we hear without, that you reflect for a short moment where you are—in Whose House, and for what purpose. Suppose the case of a number of our congregation—I mean our particular parish, who have been taught and trained to love (and do so dearly love) all these ceremonial usages which you on your part so violently denounce—suppose they were to rush violently into some dissenter's chapel, and, in their enthusiasm, seize upon the seats appropriated to the regular congregation of the place, make violent outcries against the minister, deride and scoff at the method of their worship, and end by some gross act of personal destruction of their property—what would be said of such a demonstration of liberty of conscience? Why, they would be rightly placed in the list, either of those possessed with evil spirits, or those who were determined to rule the world by the sheer force of the stronger hand, and not by reason, or by Christianity. Where, then, is our idea of civil and religious liberty, our justice, our honor, our decency, and consistency of character, if that is applauded by the multitude, and permitted by the authorities of the law in one

case, if it could, as it notoriously would, be at once checked, and at once by public execration, stopped in the other case. If we do wrong, there is the law, and there are deputies, let us implead each other, and God will protect the right.

And for this building, this holy building, reared up at such cost for the Glory of God, no man surely could desire to injure or deface it; no man surely would lay his finger on it to mutilate a single ornament, or to desecrate a single stone, when he has but to reflect that it has been built solely for the poor man's use, without regard of persons, without reward of hire, free and open for his worship for ever. But, brethren, should any one, in the burning zeal of his ideas of right, make such an attempt; should any one be stimulated, in the fury of the moment, to pull down, with axes and hammers, this fair place; should you attempt to destroy, as you have threatened, that holy symbol of our faith, the Cross of our Great Redeemer; should you attempt to pass through those gates, which are the passage-way to the holy Altar of our God, know, then, that our duty would be passively to stand in the path-way of your wrath, and passively to lay down our dead bodies in the gate—for over these alone should you find a path to desecrate the symbols of your God.

How could it be possible for that to be wrong in the Church law to-day, which was right in the Church law just five months since? What was

right when the Bishop consecrated this Church on S. Barnabas' Day last, cannot be suddenly changed into wrong to-day. What has happened between June 11th and November the 24th, to have caused so great a change in the aspects of truth and falsehood as this? This rood screen, these painted windows, that cross surmounting the screen, that jewelled cross upon the altar, these holy vessels, this method of service, these vestments, every item and particular which now you see, you might have seen then; for there is no difference or change in the building—it is the very same in its beauty, the very same in its uses, the very same in the loving voice with which it would fain speak to you, and say, “Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”

There is one comfort. We have spoken to you of Charity, we have plied you with the topics of love, we have urged you with the arguments of justice, but still all may fail even yet. Well, if it should fail, if still violence should be your determination, there is this one comfort—we will passively suffer, but, at the same time, we shall passively conquer. Even in your victory over us, we shall have the victory over you. You may get the advantage over us, in the fury of your misplaced zeal, but we shall have the real advantage over you; for we shall, God helping us, manifest to you, in the midst of suffering, the victory of Charity; and so the words of the Apostle shall still be true, we shall know it comes of God, and “CHARITY NEVER FAILETH.”

SERMON XXII.

SEEKING THE LORD WHILE NEAR.

(PREACHED AT S. PAUL'S, ON THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT, 1850, WHILE
THE RIOTS WERE STILL CONTINUED AT S. BARNABAS'.)

ISAIAH lv. 6.

*“ Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon
Him while He is near.”*

IT is evident from these words that there may be times and circumstances under which the Lord is not to be found, and in which the Lord is not near. What these times and circumstances are, I will endeavor, my brethren, to show, and thence deduce a lesson.

First, it is plain, by a glance at Scripture history, that by many of His creatures God, in the sense of His revelation, has never been known at all, and, therefore, if not known, never found, never called upon. In the ancient world, one single family in Abraham, and, as the world grew, still that one single family in the house of Israel, was all that the Almighty vouchsafed to bless with the knowledge of

His Will. And so multitudes there were, the descendants of Ham and Japheth, who never had it in their power to call upon God, or to seek Him, beyond the scanty limits of their own understanding; and what that understanding amounted to, we can readily observe in the Athenian and the Roman, in whom, God never having been near in His revealed Word, there existed, at the time of our Lord's Advent, the grossest sensuality and vice, coupled with the highest intellectual and philosophical attainments.

And even after this, when at length in Abraham's seed all the nations of the earth were blessed, and the partition-wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down, still how very slow and gradual was the progress of the saving knowledge of God manifested throughout the nations. And even up to this very day, what a vast field of heathenism still remains, in which the Gospel seed has never been sown. How many nations upon nations in China, India, America, and Africa, who still (as they have been doing for 4000 years) live without further knowledge of God, than simply His Existence? How many to whom our great epoch, the Advent of Christ—our great point of history from which we date all we read, and all we think of—has no meaning, inasmuch as it has never been heard of, and furnishes neither call nor warning, inasmuch as its voice to them has never sounded. This vast multitude of souls, then, embracing the past and the present, have been, and are, souls, by whom God, in

the real signification of the Name, has never been found, and to whom God, in His real Essence, has never been near.

But now, contracting our view, so as to keep to these chosen people, in whose history we find that the pages of the Gospel have made a very conspicuous manifestation, *i.e.*, to the Jewish and a portion of the Gentile world, and principally the European nations who have embraced its outward profession in the Catholic Church,—even among these, is God found of all—is God near all? Alas! no. There are many (and as we know most of our own country, so let us speak of our own country), there are many, both in the fields and in the cities, who have never received, or even professed personally the knowledge of God. I speak not of the Church, or of dissent particularly, but broadly and as a general fact, that a very great portion of the people of England know not God—that they even make no profession of Him; that a good portion of them are not even baptized; that neither His Laws, nor His Will, nor His Word, is by them, even in theory, a matter of personal embracing. And were I to confine this observation more closely to the real Catholic teaching of the Church, to the right and due administration of the Sacraments, to the pure and sincere preaching of the Word of God, according to the interpretation of the fathers and doctors of all times, then how much more strongly must it be made. First, in the administration;

secondly, in the reception of the Sacrament of Baptism. How many utterly deny its grace, openly do so, and in the teeth of words which they confess with their lips; in the clergy neglecting its forms and usages, as commanded by the Church; in the laity neglecting, in many cases, even its very outward pretence! Yes, indeed, it is a truth most awful in such a country, blessed of God as ours is, that multitudes of those baptized professedly deny the grace of their regeneration as at all involved therein; while multitudes, observing the desecration and want of sincerity in its use, fly from it altogether into the increasing ranks of Anabaptism. Then again, in the rite of Confirmation, practically a rite without meaning to thousands who use it, a rite without use to thousands who only hear of it as an obsolete practice, not affecting themselves. The greater portion of the lower orders never receive this rite all. And then, in regard to the greater Sacrament of the Eucharist, though nominally taught by the Church as one of the Sacraments "necessary to salvation"—though expressed in the Catechism to be in the light of nourishment to the soul, as bread and wine is to the body, that is necessary to life, and without which we cannot continue our being—still, how well it is known, that neither in its fulness is the Sacramental blessing held, nor in the real presence of Christ's Body therein, nor in its sacrificial offering, nor in its propitiatory efficacy for man's sin; and no wonder, therefore, that it is

by thousands set aside as a useless or a painful theory, realizing nothing, therefore in their minds of little value. All this is very fearful, but it is no less true; and it shows how, in these higher and fuller meanings, to many even yet God is not known, to their faith and lives He is not near; and, therefore, not being known, He cannot be found, and not being near, cannot be called upon.

Why this is so—why it is that God, in the very same country, should reveal Himself to some, and not to others—should call together in a Church, some as disciples, and baptize them, and teach them His laws and His ways, and yet leave others in the natural darkness of their minds, alienate from Him, and outcast; why the teaching of the Church, in the fuller Sacramental graces, should be made known to some, and not to others; why this is so, we must not even make a matter of speculation; for it is no more than the call of Abraham out of the ancient world of idolatry, or the call of certain of the Gentiles prior to others;—as now, for instance, for fourteen or fifteen hundred years England has been called, and yet not one single tribe in China has been called. Why this is so, we must not wonder; but only, reading God's Word, know that it is His Will; just as S. Paul directs us in Rom. ix. "Thou wilt not say, then, unto me, Why doth He find fault, for who hath resisted His Will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him Who formed it,

Why hast Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show His Wrath, and to make His Power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. And that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom He hath called not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." No! we can no more presume to ask or reason upon the question, why God hath called some of us to Christianity, and others He has left uncalled, or why He has given to some so much higher faith than He has to others, than we can upon any other question in which He has made mankind different, some rich, and others poor; some of beautiful form of body, others deformed and crippled; some of noble and commanding intellect, others without any intellect at all. All that we have to behold and assent to is the fact, that these things are so, leaving it, by faith, to His inscrutable Wisdom and Justice, that every man, in the day of judgment, will be rewarded or condemned according to his gifts, according to that which he hath received, and not according to that which he hath not received. And we may conclude it as certain, that those who have never had an opportunity of calling upon God, will not be condemned for not doing so; those to whose hearts and consciences God has never been near, will not

be blamed for not seeking Him. For how could they call upon Him whom they have not known; or seek Him, of Whose very Existence they were unaware? Grace, in its several degrees and proportions, is, what the word implies, a free gift. Those who have it will be in their sphere responsible for it. Those who have it not, will not be condemned, but judged in God's Everlasting Mercy.

But now let us contract our view a little closer still. Let us contemplate those who have been openly received into the Church of Christ—have received the Sacramental grace of Baptism—have been nurtured and educated in the faith—have publicly and openly, before man and God, recognized their responsibility as new creatures of His Holy Spirit, fed and nurtured by His Eucharistic food. I presume there cannot be many in the present congregation not of this description. In Baptism, as the outward form conveying the Sacramental grace of God's call, we all have been received as His. By our presence here to worship and pray to Him, we all, at this moment, testify our knowledge of Him, and our willingness to be judged of Him as His. Then of us, let it be asked—is it quite certain that no time or circumstance shall arise, in which God may not be found by us, or God may not be near us? that is to say, in other words, have we, once being called to a knowledge of God, once baptized, once professing His faith, once receiving of His Eucharistic pledge, have we a positive assurance that

we shall abide in these graces to the end of our days? The best way of judging of the future is to look to the experience of the past. Compare, then, the covenant, which, in Baptism, you, my brethren, entered upon with God, and ratified in your own persons, at mature age, at Confirmation. Compare that covenant made, with your fulfilment of it, up to the present day. Is all clear and satisfactory? Is all fulfilled and safe? If not, as assuredly it is not, if (whatever you may be now) you can call to mind many lapses from the purity of your baptismal vow, and can thus testify to your own reason of what is past, may it not be carried on to the future? As you have sinned since Baptism, so you may sin again; as you have fallen, having received grace, so you may fall, even receiving more grace.

There can, indeed, be no stability or certainty for salvation, as long as life is life; for "to call," let us remember, is not to "choose:" "Many are called, but few chosen." To be the first in the commencement of our Christianity, is by no means the same thing as the being first in its completion; for the first shall very frequently be last, and the last first, as saith our Lord more than once. To run in the race of the arena, is by no means the same thing as to win the crown: "For many run, but one receiveth the prize," saith S. Paul. To be even a "chosen vessel," as that very same S. Paul was—one picked out and eminent for gifts of grace, is by no means the same thing as to ensure the completion of those

gifts in God's kingdom; for even he that was so chosen was afraid lest, after preaching to others, he should be a "castaway."

So then, brethren, even you, with all your privileges and blessings in the Christian faith—a chosen people, a royal priesthood, kings and priests unto God—even you, with your knowledge of God complete, and your sacramental admission into His kingdom on earth positive, worshippers and adorers of His Holy Name, believers in His Divinity Who died for you, and looking now to the cross on which He atoned for your sins in Blood, which sprinkles your hearts—even you may possibly be in such circumstances, and such times may come upon you, as may render the Prophet's words of this day words of meaning: "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near."

If there is any truth certain in the workings of the human heart, it is this—that sin drives away grace. Grace is yours now, if you are free from sin; and in proportion as sin is absent, so is grace present; in proportion as sin is present, grace is absent.

Again; if there is another truth certain in the workings of the human heart, it is this—that the commission of sin, or the abstaining from sin, is within a man's own power. No man can possibly say, when he is tempted, he is tempted of God. If a man sins, being a Christian, he sins of his own will. Inadvertent sins, those sins which adhere to

his weak nature as part of himself while he is in the flesh, those sins I speak not of, for they are venial—they are anticipated, as washed away in the waters of our Baptism, and promised to be forgiven, on our repentance and confession of them to Almighty God; but I mean by sin now, a continual course or habit of sin—wilful, premeditated, and determined sin; such as a man living in drunkenness, fornication, sensuality, thieving, adultery, fraud, and the like. It is quite clear that this sort of life is in a man's own power. He embraces it voluntarily—he pursues it knowingly—he continues in it, with the power, ever present to him, of abandoning it at any moment.

Therefore, putting these two truths together, we conclude, that wilful or habitual and unrepented sin will sooner or later place a man in the condition of those by whom God can no longer be found, and to whom God is no longer near; and that all the grace which in such a case a man may have received, as once a Christian, all the gifts and privileges of which in the Church he may have been partaker, will be forfeited. Not only will there be no salvation for him, as in the covenant of Christ, but most assuredly eternal condemnation; as having (not like the heathen world, or the uncalled, who erred through ignorance) done despite to the Holy Spirit, and cast aside the knowledge and rejected the love which God of His Infinite Mercy has proffered. "For the time is come," saith S. Peter,

“that judgment must begin at the House of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?” And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Esau received the grace of God; he was the first born; he would, in the ordinary course of things, have been the line of conveying the promised seed; but having that birthright, he, of his own will, sold it. Therein he displayed a type of the Christian falling into sin—one who possesses, by his birth in baptism, the birthright of the kingdom of God, yet voluntarily selling that birthright for a mess of pottage. And so it is said, “Lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau, who, for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright; for ye know, how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” Judas among the Apostles tells us the same truth as Esau among the patriarchs; for Judas was one called of God—he exercised the gifts of the Apostleship—he believed Christ, followed Christ, preached Christ; but then sin came upon him, and he fell, wilfully fell; and, as it is shortly but awfully expressed, “he went to his own place.” Ananias and Sapphira were believers in Christ, and were believers to a considerable extent, selling their possessions in love for His Church, and casting themselves actively into the course which the Lord pre-

scribed; but sin came upon them in the midst of their discipleship—they kept back part of the price, and lied unto the Holy Ghost; for which, so grievous a sin was it in the Eyes of God, they found no place for repentance; and He never drew near to them, nor was He found of them again, but in their sin they perished. Simon, too, was a believer, a professed believer, and sought holy baptism, and was baptized; then, offering money for the gift of the Holy Ghost in laying on of hands, Peter said, “Thy money perish with thee. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the Sight of God.” And it is never said that he ever repented or was restored; at any rate, in the midst of that grievous sin God had withdrawn from him—He was no longer near him—He was not found.

In case, then, there should be any among us now, with all previous privileges of the Church and the Holy Spirit vouchsafed and used in times past, still indulging some course of sinful life, that course of life must at once be abandoned. The very next verse in the Prophet which succeeds the text is this: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord; and He will have mercy upon Him, for He will abundantly pardon.” The forsaking of sin is the very first condition of seeking the Lord; that done, the Lord may be found; not done, He cannot and will not be found. It is perfectly useless, not to say a blasphemy, against the Majesty of God, that

a man or woman living in a known course of sin, should presume to come and sit in God's House, and pretend to pray in God's House, and join himself to the Christian congregation, still confessing sin externally with the mouth, and hearing absolution outwardly with the ear, and yet withal not abandoning the sin confessed; the guilt of such an action, inasmuch as it adds hypocrisy to sin, and shamelessness to pollution, sears and hardens the heart, and so drives God further and further away. Any notion of a deferred repentance for inward sin (still retaining the outward shell of religious profession to cover it in the sight of men, or for self-deception, to cover it in our own sight) is of all the temptations of Satan the most dreadful. From such a man, every year that passes, nay, every day, places God at a further and further distance, and renders his ultimate salvation more and more improbable. And yet I greatly fear there are many such: some carried away by the lusts of the flesh; others living in a constant scene of fraud, treachery, and oppression; others, though not so violent in any outbreak of sin, yet passively sinful, neglecting all religious duties save those which are external, passing their time in frivolous works of vanity, subjects of the world and mammon in every thought.

It is not that they are ignorant of God, and know not what religion is; nor is it that their consciences are perfectly at rest; on the contrary, they know very well, in theory, what a Christian ought

to be; they know that the world is the enemy of God; they know that Christianity demands of them great and continual sacrifices, and yet withal they defer all notion of guiding their own lives in practice, by that which they acknowledge in theory, to some remote and contingent time. When they have done with the world, then they will turn to God; when they are old, when their passions are subdued, when they have got out of the world all that the world has to give, then they will forsake their sins and lead a new life. As yet they will enjoy themselves a little longer, and conceal their sinful habits under the veil of an external religious appearance. They deceive themselves into the imagination, that under the forms of outward worship, the Sunday decencies of civilized life, the hearing of a sermon at appointed times, an external accommodation of themselves to the routine of the world's exactions of morality, they may cover their retreat when the right time comes, and become religious in good earnest when they please. They would not discard the chance altogether. Seeing death is certain, they would contemplate a return to God at some indefinite time, before it should arrive. They argue perversely in the aspect of religion, that it is wearisome and irksome, and had better be dealt with for as short a time as needs be, when absolutely compulsory. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." "Let us eat and drink while it is day, for to-morrow we die." "By and bye, when

the shadows begin to fall, by and bye we will return and seek God."

But the question is—How do you know that you will be able to find Him? Is it so certain that He will always wait upon your seeking? Is it so certain that, when you thus put Him off to a distant time, He may not retire so far from you as not to be within reach? You speak as though all things were at your mere command and wish, and that you had nothing more to do than will the thing desired, and it was to be done. Now, there are two very good reasons why you ought not to be so certain of this. The one reason lies in yourself—the other in God.

I. First, look to yourself. I should say that it was quite impossible that a man should thus deliberately remain in sin, without a grievous, probably an irreparable wound to the whole essence of his moral and religious feeling. As yet, perhaps, he may have some sense of conscience left, but it is not sure that he will always have it. A mind habituated to sin loses even its knowledge of the possibility of holiness—becomes dulled towards all that is good; and though a desire of repentance, and an acknowledgment of its necessity, may exist now, it does not follow that it will exist always. When the specified time to which it is deferred shall have arrived, the desire of repentance, and even its very knowledge, may have departed. Now God might be found, but then He may not, probably will not.

Now they might call upon Him, for He is near—then it may be, probably will be, useless to do so, for He will be far away.

II. And a second reason lies in God. I need not speak of life's uncertainty, of the sudden approach of death even to the strongest and the youngest. That is a thing so well accounted of by all who observe the course of the world, that I will put it out of the question; but I will mention only the opportunities of grace—the uncertainty which hangs over them—the existence and well-being of the Church—the danger now, to us especially impending, that, in the essence of her ministrations, she may be withdrawn. I presume you, my brethren, would not be inclined to argue, as some do, that God is likely to be found by you in any miraculous operation of His Grace—that you, as a chosen vessel, although deliberately living in sin, (for this is your supposed case,) are still to be recovered by some overwhelming special demonstration of the Spirit, so calling, that you could not resist. That ultra-calvinistic doctrine is too shocking for you to hold. If not, what are the means by which you look to be called? They are the ordinary channels of His Church. And what Church? The Church in which, by God's providence, you have been born, and have received hitherto the graces of His Sacraments. Well; but consider just now what is going on round about us: the dissensions and animosities of all parties, bearing down with one common weight to crush

and extinguish that body of which you are members—the doctrines of the Church committed to the popular will. Not as the Church appoints, but as the temporal power appoints, so shall the Church teach. Not as the Catholic faith is maintained in the Creed, “without which no man can be saved,” but as the people shall say, they will have it. Witness now, mobs raised in the streets, and newspapers pronouncing what shall be true and right in worship. The whole Church trembling in a prospect, not remote, of separation, schism, and general disruption. Are not these things so? If, then, your thought is, that through and by means of this Church your return to God, and your seeking after God, is to be determined, is not its present position a great warning to you of the necessity of the immediate fulfilment of that return?

There is one great hope, indeed, and one solid source of comfort, in the idea, that our Blessed Lord has promised, specially promised, that He will never fail us as a Church entirely; that if the Church is built upon His rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; but then that promise does not attach to the Church of England nationally, but only to the Catholic Church. And it is but, after all, a sorry consolation to be told, “Never mind, the Church in which have been hitherto all your hopes, and joys, and blessings, and means of grace—your Baptism, your Confirmation, your holy Orders, your succession of Bishop from bishop, your habits of wor-

ship and prayer—this Church is in danger; but never mind, there is another not far off, and thither you can go without much trouble or cost.” Not so; while I allow it is some consolation, yet is it not a fearful thing to dwell upon, that where we have hitherto found God, perhaps ere long we may no longer find Him; for He will have withdrawn, where hitherto He has always been so near; perhaps ere long He will be far away, and neither grace nor sacrament remain? And this is what I want to put to one living still in some sin: “You must be reclaimed by the Spirit of God; and you must be reclaimed by the Spirit of God in the Church; and perhaps the Church will be overwhelmed in this great outbreak of infidelity and latitudinarianism, now bursting in at our very doors. Perhaps the method and order of the means of grace to which, in form, at least, you have been used, will be withdrawn. God may think fit, in just punishment for our common sins, to say, “The candlestick of this Church shall be set aside, and another, which will serve Me more faithfully, shall be set up in its place.” If so, where will you be in the midst of your impenitent life, to seek Him, Who will not be found?—His beacon-light, which hitherto shone before you, extinguished; His Word of preaching silenced; His pure and Catholic worship set aside; Sacramental grace no longer put before you; prayer and adoration, in their constant flow of daily offering in God’s Temple, no longer heard.

What is to remain for you? How can you talk, *then*, of God being near?

Brethren, perhaps this is the very fruit of a conjunction of our many sins, that opportunities of returning to God will be withdrawn, and the heart of England left alone, to wither and dry up, in the indifference and infidelity of a perverse and ungodly people.

So far, then, I have regard to the sinner's return; but there is another view, brethren, even still—for we are not all in a state of actual sin, God forbid—but the same line of thought will apply to even the good and holy in the retention of grace, as to the wicked in its restoration; for if we may fall from grace once given—if the possession of privileges and graces now does not embrace the necessity of their possession for ever—then the calling upon God, and the seeking from God His Help, His continued Help, His sustentation and safe custody of the treasures committed to us, is a duty from which we never can be released. And hence the value of never-ceasing prayer, never-ceasing worship, never-ceasing Sacraments, never-ceasing study of His Word.

The recall of an actual habitual sinner is not the only work which the Gospel has to do; it is indeed one of its works, and so great a work, that it has pleased God to say, for the assurance of the fallen, that He has more pleasure in the return of one repentant sinner, than He has in the contemplation

of ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance; but thus it is said, as all of us would say, in the admiration we should express in some extraordinary miracle, leaving the ordinary works of nature for a time. But the ordinary works of nature, nevertheless, in the mass, in the aggregate, convey more of wonder, and more of wisdom, and more of power, than the single case, when once the single case has had its way. Even so; the many just—and may we not hope that there *are* many just?—many, that is, that fight the good fight of faith, that keep themselves pure and undefiled members of Christ's Body, that abstain from all sinful actions, and dedicate themselves in their integrity to the good works which our Blessed Lord has taught? Surely we may. Then what of these? Can God be found of them? Is God near them?

If He is near the sinner, however deep a sinner, upon repentance, in order that he may return, how much nearer must He be the faithful and the just, in order to their preservation? This surely must follow. But then, it just as much follows, that if, by the penitent, it is necessary that God, being near, should be sought; so also by the just:—if of the one sought for mercy, of the other sought for help—if of the one sought for pardon, of the other sought for sustenance—if not to retrace lost steps, then to struggle and fight on. And is not the one case as difficult as the other—I was about to say, is

it not more difficult?—for the one has on his side all the keener stimulants of an excited and full heart, turning away from the gratification of passions which have been enjoyed only to satiate with disgust, and so, turning to God, he has a kind of repose and rest; whereas the other has the daily toil and struggle, the ordinary every-day combat, resisting out of mere obligation of duty, fighting because a sense of terror fills him, in the idea of the possibility of failure. The one needs help in a concentrated fulness of misery, which, by its very fulness, presses on the mind, and suffers it not to rest till it gains it; the other has only this even tenor of a struggle, which, ending in a victory to-day, has but to be begun again to-morrow. Add to which, the knowledge not only of a mere halt or stoppage in the course of every battle—not only the keeping the enemy at bay—but there is the necessity also of advance, a march continually forward. We have good works upon good works, and the perfection of one is only the beginning of another. Well then, in all this, what will it be to us if, in the accustomed places, and in the accustomed ways, we find not God? If in the Church Sacraments and privileges of daily prayer, and constant communion, and other such helps and supports, we behold God no longer near, what will it be to us to be despoiled of all that we have been accustomed to see, and all that we have been accustomed to do; to find the ground on which we rested cut from

beneath our feet; to find the rock on which we fondly trusted, as a sure foundation, crumbling into dust? Use then, dear brethren, what you have while you can. Reject not what is before you while it is before you, and while the Church is yet in a condition to supply it. God is near as yet—call upon Him while He is so near. The Lord is still to be found among us yet—seek Him while He may be so found. Be sure of this, that every prayer you utter you are approaching nearer to God, and God is approaching nearer to you. Every communion in which you seek Him at His altar, you are finding somewhat more of God than you had found before; and God is finding more in you, for the sake of His dear Son, to love and rejoice in. Every office of the Church in which you partake, every confession duly made, every absolution faithfully received, every creed heartily pronounced, every Psalm lifted up to God with the voice of sincerity and truth, draws you to a deeper finding of God; and though His Thoughts are not naturally your thoughts, nor your ways His Ways, still you are day by day losing more of your own ways, and, by fresh outpourings of His Grace, learning more of His Ways. You are conquering, purifying, elevating your own nature by approaching His Nature, and day by day are expecting and looking for, with greater confidence in Christ, the awful time when you shall stand before Him near indeed, even Face to face, to be questioned of the deeds done in the flesh; the question but once—the judgment for ever.

SERMON XXIII.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

(PREACHED AT S. BARNABAS', ON THE 2ND SUNDAY IN ADVENT, 1850; BEING
THE LAST SERMON DURING THE RIOTS, THE MOB STILL
THREATENING THE CHURCH.)

S. LUKE xxi. 25, 26.

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.”

It is a solemn season at which we are met together in this House of God—the season of our Lord's Advent. It is a solemn day also on which we are met together, a day of mourning and sorrow; when the perplexities of men are great—perplexities in faith and duty—perplexities arising from the misunderstandings of the wicked, and their hatred of the truth; a day of men's hearts failing them for fear—fear arising from some great impending calamity, which we have no power to set aside, and no

wisdom to avert—a day therefore, to us, suitably recording the Advent of our Lord to Judgment.

I would speak to you, brethren, of this solemn season, and I would apply it to this solemn day. I would remind you, that as we are met here to-day, and see each other face to face, and for a time are joined together in this assembly on earth, so there will come a time when, if we never meet again here, we shall meet in heaven; an awful time—a most fearful time; a time of searching of hearts and rending of spirits; a time of close questioning of motives, and of trying the hearts and reins; a time of sifting thoughts, examining words, exposing deeds; a time when the eternity of glory or the eternity of condemnation shall be given to each of us, either in the kingdom of our Lord, or in the kingdom of the Evil One.

It is this to which the text alludes. The Day of judgment—called in Holy Scripture “the great day,” “the day of the Lord,” “the last day,” “that day,” “a day of darkness and gloominess,” “a day of clouds and thick darkness,” “a great and very terrible day of the Lord.” It is full of awe, full of fear, full of woe, full of perplexity, full of wonder. “Woe unto you,” saith the prophet Amos, “that desire the Day of the Lord! To what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.”

Now, *will* there be a day of judgment? Have you, men and brethren, in any way realized this Scriptural truth? Do you believe in it? Are you

certain of it? A day of judgment! What meaning do you attach to it? What is judgment? Concerning what? Of whom? When and wherefore? Have you thought much of these things? Have you thought that there must be an end here, a beginning somewhere else—a close of all on earth, a beginning somewhere else—a sleep here, an awakening somewhere else—a death here, a resurrection somewhere else—a grave here, a glory somewhere else—a falling away here, a restoration somewhere else? Have you thought of these things? May I speak to you as brethren to-day? Would you permit me to speak to you yet once again, and ask you, Have you thought of these things? If not, may be it would do us all good to think of them to-day.

Now, first, I ask you to think over this question with me, What is a judgment? It means a decision and a sentence for or against us; a decision or a sentence, whether we are right or wrong, in some matter which is to be judged.

I should say that if there were no Scriptures at all, we should be able to form a very satisfactory idea concerning this fact, as a fact. Every one has within him an intuitive feeling about right and wrong. It comes even from nature. How does even the youngest child, when guilty of any act of disobedience, look up at once into his parent's face, and expect a rebuke and a punishment?—or if pursuing some little action of obedience, look up for a

smile of praise, and a blessing of approval? It is the seed, by nature, of the great doctrine of a day of judgment. Whence do men, when they go into the world, (no matter what their religious character is, only take them as worldly characters, yet,) whence do they guide themselves in certain lines of conduct, this way or that way? It is because they know that they are accountable to society for the manner in which they employ the privileges which society gives them. This is man's testimony of a day of judgment.

But let alone the tribunal of men, there is yet another tribunal within ourselves—it is that of conscience. We are continually judging, we cannot pass a day without sitting in judgment upon ourselves. Let a man meditate any unworthy action, let the thought arise, let it just glance across him, that he may acquire some accession to his wealth by a fraud, or give loose to the lustful feelings of nature by some deviation from his usual habits of purity, does there not immediately arise within his bosom a silent but uncompromising monitor, which tells him it is wrong? Is there not something, you know not what, which argues with each one of you, remonstrates with you, will not suffer you to proceed? In every bias and inclination which you have to do wrong, up rises this silent adviser, to stop you. In every evil thought that arises within your breast, up rises some counter instinct and property within your own bosom, to point it out to

you as evil. And should you resist her, should you struggle against her, and give no heed to her advice, drive her away, and harden yourself against her—should you commit the meditated sin of which she first warned you as a counsellor, does she not afterwards come back, with tenfold power, and punish you as a judge? Does any man ever commit a sin and remain at rest? First comes a questioning and a little silent murmuring within, then a regret, then a turning aside with a wish that it had never been, then a remorse and a gnawing of the mind in the contemplation of the past, then a judgment of wrong. It is the work of the Spirit—it is the voice of conscience speaking within, moved by the power of God. She will not let you act at random. Be you the most ignorant of men, she will teach you that there are such things as virtue and vice, right and wrong, justice and injustice; and if you violate them, you are accountable to her, and she will, with her bitter stings of remorse, soon cause you to know that you are not as the brutes, to follow wherever your passions may carry you.

Now, this is what the Scripture describes, when it speaks of men as being a "law unto themselves." S. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans ii. 15, tells us, that we, by nature, "show the work of the law written in our hearts, our conscience also bearing witness, and our thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another;" and it is this argument which came so home to the feelings of the

unrighteous Felix. Felix knew nothing of the Scriptures; he did not know that Jesus was to come to judge the quick and the dead; yet when Paul preached before him "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled?" Why did he tremble? What caused him to fear, or of whom was he afraid? It was his natural reason, or conscience, that moved him within to remember that he was an accountable being; that he was responsible for what he was doing to some superior power; and though he knew nothing of the resurrection of the dead, nor believed it, yet he felt that there was a God Who judgeth. We do not then come to the announcement of Holy Scripture, that "a Day of judgment" is appointed of God, quite unprepared. The fact of a day being so appointed, would only so far harmonize and fall in with our preconceived intuitive feelings. It would seem but the concentration, in one specific point, and with one specific end, the final adjudication of all that we had been ourselves, judging of ourselves, during our life on earth. In other words, a day of final judgment, fixed by Almighty God, is in just analogy with the works of nature—it is the same thing begun on earth, perfected in Heaven.

But there are special particulars described to us in Holy Scripture, most important particulars. Being convinced of the fact, let us now look to these particulars.

And first, the nature of the action. The nature

of the action is described as that of immense magnitude and glory on the part of God. The first Advent of God in human flesh is one of humiliation, contradistinguished from that of the second Advent, which is to be one of glory, as prophetically told in such passages as this of Daniel, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him; and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." And this just agrees with our Blessed Lord Himself: "then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory. And He shall send His Angels, with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the one end of Heaven to the other." And again: "Nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the Right Hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven."

But though a day of great glory on God's part, His awful Power displayed, His Omnipotence and Immensity, His grand array of saints and Angels, the Voice of His thunder, even a glorious Voice, yet,

in correspondence on the other side, it is to be a day of great gloom and alarm on the part of man: "The tribes of the earth shall mourn; there shall be distress of nations with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear, and looking after those things which shall be coming on the earth: for the powers of Heaven shall be shaken." Why this fear on man's part, when all is glory on God's part? Because of sin; because of the alienation of man from God; the aversion which Satan's unrepenting children shall have towards Him Whom they have disobeyed, and hated, and flee from, and fear. Men calling "to the rocks to hide them, and the mountains to fall on them, to shelter them from the wrath of the Lamb."

A Lamb to have wrath! God to have no mercy! Yes; because of the enormity of sin unatoned for, of sin unrepented, and having no respect to the Sacrifice and Merits of Christ—simply because of this, He will come; the Son of Man will come in His awful glory of a righteous judge, surrounded by all the symbols of His Heavenly state. He will not put aside His Manhood, for that He never will, until all things shall be subdued under His Feet, and He shall have put down all authorities and powers, and shall have given up all things to Him Who gave them. But then time will be no longer, and the race of men, and this world, will have ceased to be. The judgment is first, and as a Man Jesus will judge, but as a Man Glorified, glorified

with the Divinity which He had with His Father before the worlds were—descending from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God. It will be the Man Christ Jesus, exalted in His Manhood by the power and dominion conferred upon Him in consequence of His Passion. It will be the Man Whom God has ordained, but the Man so changed from the poor and despised Being that we beheld on earth, that we shall no longer recognise Him, any more than the Apostles did in that type of His glory, the Transfiguration. His raiment will be white and glistening as then; His Countenance will be veiled in some majestic dignity, which words will not describe, and which passes all our thoughts to fancy. He will come riding upon the wings of the wind; terrible will be the voice of the trumpet which shall announce Him, mighty the array of Angels who shall throng around Him, bearing Him on through clouds of endless glory, the very glory of the Father from Whose Right Hand He will immediately come. Such, then, will be His coming. But concerning what will He judge, and whom? It will be of the quick, and of the dead; it will be concerning all those who shall then be alive on earth, and concerning all those who may have been dead since the days of Adam.

These are the particulars. It will be severe, *i.e.*, scrutinizing and searching. As it leaves no individual man, so it will leave no individual thing. It

will bear upon the actions of every one, the words of every one, the thoughts of every one. Do men say, they are content that actions shall be judged; but scruple at words? Do men say that words are nothing but trifles, passing fugitive things, which it cannot be worth while for God to hear? Do we say that thoughts and motives are nothing; that they are beyond men's power, out of their reach, not subject to their own scrutiny, therefore not to God's? Do men say that they hide within their own breasts secrets of sin, unknown passages of fraud, lying, vanity, foulness, lust, deceit, revenge—secrets of sin, and that cannot be known? Do men say that their secret prayers, wishes, hopes—the motives which have led them on to this or that act, the thoughts involved in it, the incentives towards its repetition—do they say that all this is an inscrutable hidden thing, known only to themselves, and cannot be detected? Oh! my brethren, let them be undeceived. Let them acknowledge the awful truth, that there is not one either thought or word, much more act, but will be brought in to weigh in the balance for or against, at the great day of the Lord. Do you doubt it?

Concerning words: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Concerning thoughts S. Paul says, "That it is a

day when God shall judge the secrets of men." And again (Rom. iv. 6), "When the Lord comes, He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts."

Concerning acts: "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Moreover, the day of judgment will be universal: no man shall escape—no prince so mighty but must submit to it—no peasant so humble but will be there arraigned; and so S. Paul tells us, in Rom. xiv. 10: "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; for it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then, every one of us shall give an account of himself to God; and Jesus Himself says (Matt. xxv. 31), "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy Angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations." To this I must add two descriptions in the Book of the Revelation (vi. 15): "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the Face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come,

and who shall be able to stand?" And in Rev. xx. 12, "I saw the dead, both small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in those books; and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and the graves gave up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to his works."

Again: it will be sudden. Upon this ground proceed all our Lord's directions, to be watchful, to be ready: "Be ye therefore ready, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not." And so S. James says (v. 9), "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the Judge standeth before the door." Jesus says: "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels of heaven; neither the Son, but the Father." And again in S. Luke to the same purpose, urging vigilance and caution (S. Luke xxi.): "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

So again it will be final—that is to say, the sentence then pronounced will never be revoked. It will be decisive; there will be no escape from it, no

pleading against it, no alteration of it. God will pronounce either our reward or our punishment, our salvation or our condemnation; and whichever it may be, there will be no appeal against it, it will be eternal. Thus in S. Matt. xxv. 46, when the sheep are on the right hand and the goats upon the left, Jesus says: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." And S. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, says: "He will render to every man according to his deeds: to them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."

And yet, once more; the Judge will be able to effect all this without any possibility of error. There will be no need of sifting evidence, or of examining witnesses. There will be no need of listening to excuses, or of hearing the reasons and defences which men will then try to set up. There will be no saying, "Lord, when saw we Thee hungered, or naked, or in prison?" There will be no saying, "Lord, I was weak; Lord, I was tempted above my strength, I was overcome by accident, I was overcome by fear, I was misled, I was deceived, I was compelled against my will." No; none of these excuses will avail, even for a moment.

All will be clearly and distinctly known to the Judge before-hand; no word need be uttered on the part of the prisoners. The vast assembly of nations will be at once, and without any hesitation, appointed to their several portions. The wicked will then fatally perceive, that "they, in their lifetime, had received their good things;" but now those good things are over—that now all the gratifications of pride, and sensuality, and vice will have made but a poor recompense for the prospects of eternal misery into which they will be plunged; while the righteous, "shining forth as the sun," lifting up their heads with exultation and triumph—their fears ended, their dangers overcome—will behold their redemption drawing nigh, and will enter on the Right Hand of Jesus, their Redeemer, into glory everlasting.

And now, brethren in the Lord, what shall we say to each other concerning this great thing? First, shall we judge each other?—impute motives, fasten imputations, imagine wrong, suspect evil of each other? Had we not better wait, and let God judge concerning us? Oh! how fearfully will He judge those who, having a beam in their own eye, as probably most of you have, come here to judge their brethren, bidding them to cast out their motes? How fearfully will He have to say in His Justice, "How came you in here, not having on a wedding garment? You came to My feast, you

pressed in, you came out of the high ways, and you thronged in a great multitude my Sanctuary—coming with a severe, scrutinizing, watching, suspicious mind; you came without the wedding garment of love, and no man coming into My feast without that wedding garment, can have a place in My kingdom. Cast him into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Secondly, shall we look on each other in hatred, malice, revenge? Shall we, when we think each other guilty of some wrong, take the duty of punishing that wrong into our own hands, without any authority given us of God or man? Had we not better wait and let God punish the wrongdoers? “Vengeance is mine, I will repay,” saith the Lord. Oh! how fearfully will the all-searching scrutiny of the Son of God ask us, concerning what we do, Why did you act thus? Why did wrath fill your heart towards this man, or towards that, so as to cause you to burst forth in bitterness of speech, or clamor, or violence? Who made you a judge over your brother, and an avenger to execute wrath? Do you not think, brethren, that we had better each one of us look within and prepare for such questions as these, rather than be occupied with questions about each other? There was a great sinner on one occasion brought into the presence of our Blessed Lord, to be judged of Him. The accusers wanted, in pretence, to make Him judge her; but, in reality, they had judged her

themselves long before. She was guilty of adultery. All her enemies collected round about her in a sort of anticipation of the certain verdict which they knew must be pronounced. But they had a mixed feeling, and we can hardly tell which predominated. They had partly an enmity against the woman for being a sinner; yet it would appear that they had far greater enmity against our Lord Himself; for they wanted Him, in condemning her, to condemn Himself, by becoming amenable to the law. It was one of those many occasions which they devised of tempting Him. But what did our Lord? He did not say, as they expected, "She is guilty of death;" but He said, "Look within yourselves—examine your own hearts; see if all is right there; let Him that is without sin first cast a stone at her,"—and they all went out.

Brethren, may not this be something like your case to-day? You desire, in bitterness of spirit against this Church, and against these clergy, and against myself principally, to bring railing accusations against us; but it may be very questionable whether you are so much moved by the apparent spirit of bringing us before the righteous judge, as you are by enmity towards the Righteous Judge Himself; apparently desiring to injure us, as representatives of a certain portion of the Church with which you are offended, but secretly desiring to injure the whole cause of religion and the Church of Christ altogether. We, the Clergy here, may be

guilty of wrong—much wrong—grievous wrong; no doubt we are very guilty in the Sight of God, for gross deficiencies in our various manifold duties. But that is not the question with which God will deal at the Day of Judgment; as far as you are concerned, it will be simply this: "Let him that is without sin, first cast a stone at her." Brethren, in all probability, you would, each one, go out of this Church, silenced, abashed, confessing your own unworthiness. I pray that you might. I pray that you will. I beseech you, leave our Blessed Lord Alone with us—He will deal with us. Do you take care of your own hearts.

My brethren, I would ask you most seriously to pause in this career of excitement into which you have been so ungraciously betrayed; I would ask you to give yourselves a check this day—this very day—on the principle of that greater day in which your own lives and character will form the subject of the Judgment of God. Have you considered well how very important each one circumstance of our lives is, each one day of our lives, each one transaction of our lives in which we may be engaged; how very important it is in forming our progress, in shaping our character, in tending either this way or that way, for or against our eternal salvation? It must follow, that if every thought, word, and deed, is to be the subject of examination at the day of judgment, then every thought, word, and

deed, is tending to our salvation, or the reverse. This very day, for instance, in this very multitude thronging round this holy place, there is the subject matter, for each of us, of eternal glory, or eternal condemnation. What have we come hither for? What was our motive? What have we been doing since we have been here? What have been our thoughts? What have we been saying to each other, or to God? What have been our words?

Is there wrath among any of us towards one another? Is there anger? Is there suspicion? Is there intention of injury?—desecration of things holy?—hard and harsh looks, violent gestures? Is there any mind to enter into the counsels of the ungodly against the Lord, and against His Anointed, and destroy the works of His Sanctuary? Is there any mind to violate the order of His worship, by interruptions, and outcries, and clamor? Very well; for each individual soul, here so engaged to-day, there stands before him, with a fearful certainty of retribution, the great day, when each particular now passing through his mind will be matter of salvation to him, or the reverse.

You are about to act, my Christian brother, in some particular manner—you have come hither so to act—you set out from your dwelling this morning with a mind and purpose full so to act. Did you reflect carefully concerning it before you set out? Did you reflect that your action upon that intention is now, at this very moment, ready to be

the subject of record in the Book of Life—that book in which the Angel, with a pen of iron that never blunts, and ink that never fades, and a memory that never is dull, and a watchfulness that never slumbers, writes what you are now doing, or going to do, a subject of your judgment at the great day.

Are you so very confident that you are right in what you do?—so very certain that it will bear the scrutiny of man?—so wholly and altogether removed from doubt, that you are content to rest your eternal salvation on it?

Some one may presently rise up and speak a word of heedlessness, idleness, contempt, mocking, blasphemy. My brethren, if you are about to do so, remember that it will be recorded by the Angel, and you will be judged by the righteous Judge. What may issue from an idle word—from the idle word of one single man? The stirring up the passions of a multitude, contention, struggling, bloodshed, may be murder, you will be judged hereby.

Oh! let me beseech you, then, by the bowels of mercy, by the entreaties of love, by the Voice of the Shepherd Who would gather His lambs into the fold in peace, pause!—just pause a little! Reflect! How will it bear for you in the accumulation of your sins, which no doubt are heavy enough already, without adding this?

This one word which now you are going to utter—this word, premeditated or not premeditated, intended or not intended—even this very little idle word, it shall cause you to be justified, or cause you to be condemned.

For our sakes, therefore—for your own sakes—for the sake of our common love and brotherhood, add not to our already heavy responsibility another weary burden of sin. Warned to reflect—your mind directed to the subject—your whole position clearly before you—your case depicted, so that you see it—your eyes open—if you sin now, if you sin to-day, what will be your case? It cannot be inadvertence—it cannot be accident now. The sin is being added to and accumulated, the peril of its issue growing more frightful, by the very fact of its passing through your thoughts. God will say, You were not taken by surprise, you did not act with precipitation, you did not act without warning! Oh! Christian brethren, if I could, by any word of mine coming to you from the Holy Ghost, but save you in this hour of temptation, but save you from the awful issue of your evil passions, which you came here this morning with intent to gratify—if I might deter but one, but one single soul, from any deed to-day which might add to his sins at the great judgment, and so fill up the measure of God's wrath against him, that he perish everlastingly—if I could but stave off so

great a calamity, it would be reward enough, in this labour of love, to counterbalance all the sufferings and anxieties which it has pleased God to bring upon us.

Consider what you are—Who God is—what you came to do this morning—why you came to do it—towards whom. Consider the life here, in which you are but breathing for a day—consider the life hereafter, eternal in the heavens, or infinite in hell. What may you be losing by some little petty wilfulness of the moment—what may you be gaining in a prompt repentance, and a humble and dutiful submission to God.

Now the scales are poised—the scales of the even-handed justice of an Omniscient God. It is God that judgeth. The Son of Man, He is the Righteous Judge. Now, even now, your thoughts, your words—your standing here, or your standing there—the tone of your voice—the compression of your lips—your frown of wrath, or your smile of love—your stamp of defiance, or your submission of peace—your obstinacy in resisting the Holy Ghost, Who is even now moving you, or your soft and gentle yielding to the better mood of His Gracious Influence—all, at this very moment while we stand here (God looking on), all this is pouring now quick and fast, and sure and full, into ONE of the scales of the Everlasting Judge! Now, behold it! It poises even—it is balanced! Now it inclines—

it weighs down! Whither does the index point? Is it your condemnation? Oh! surely not. You have conquered at last. It is—it is, of a great truth, the Salvation of Eternal Life!

THE END.

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